ALL IN THE SAME BOAT? – NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING
TEACHERS' EMERGING SELVES IN A U.S. MATESOL PROGRAM

By

Dominik Wolff

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Second Language Studies - Doctor of Philosophy

2015

ABSTRACT

ALL IN THE SAME BOAT? – NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING
TEACHERS' EMERGING SELVES IN A U.S. MATESOL PROGRAM

By

Dominik Wolff

Non-native speaking teachers make up a large portion of English teachers worldwide
(about 80%; according to Canagarajah, 1999) as well as of the enrolled students in graduate
TESOL programs in the United States (Llurda, 2005). In order to reveal aspects of teachers'
identity development within an MATESOL program, teacher educators would benefit from
doing justice to the ethnically, nationally, and racially diverse populations in these teacher
preparation programs. What is necessary is a fresh perspective that does not fall victim to the
"deficit discourse" (Bhatt, 2002), which traditionally has put non-native speaking teachers in a
position of lower status and power when compared to their native-speaking peers. Recently,
there have been attempts to change the established narrative of *privileged* native speakers versus
deficient non-native speakers in the fields of applied linguistics and language teaching (see
native speaker fallacy, Phillipson, 1992; Holliday, 2005). With regard to capturing teacher-
identity development, Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) argued for the use of
multiple theoretical frameworks. Following this recommendation, I analyzed the empirical data
in this longitudinal multiple-case study following possible selves theory (Markus & Nurius,
1986) and social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978). These two frameworks allowed me to uncover
both the psychological and social complexities of MATESOL students' burgeoning identities in
light of the native vs. non-native speaker discussion in the field of language teacher education.

Data sources included (1) semi-structured interviews, (2) class observations, (3)
stimulated verbal and written reports, and (4) prompted journal entries, collected throughout the

first year in an MATESOL program in the United States. Four female MATESOL students (two native speakers and two non-native speakers) with various degrees of previous English teaching experience participated in the study. The data allowed me to investigate their emerging teacher selves while critically considering the role the graduate program played in their development (or lack thereof) during the first year in the program.

The findings reveal diverse trajectories for the participating teachers' developing selves. While I found similarities in the somewhat modest development of the native speaking teachers in the course of the year, the differences between the non-native speaking teachers were quite noticeable. For one of the non-native speaking teachers, her membership in the lower status group 'non-native speakers' negatively affected her confidence and, consequently, the way she saw herself as a teacher. Furthermore, her lack of an *identity goal* (Pizzolato, 2006) or *desirable future teacher self* (Kubanyiova, 2012) stood in contrast to the other three teachers, for whom their distinct, imagined future selves acted as a catalyst for change. With regards to the MATESOL curriculum, the participants criticized the missing link between theory and classroom practice, and one non-native speaking teacher felt ill-prepared to manage problematic students and utilize her own status as a highly proficient language user in her teaching. Furthermore, the participating teachers agreed that the program prepared them to teach in a second language context, but not all of them seemed to believe that it equipped teachers as well for other contexts.

Based on the findings, I call for an increased focus on the creation of *identity goals* in language teacher preparation programs with an emphasis on their suitability to a variety of teaching contexts. I also urge teacher preparation programs to increase the use of reflective processes and peer learning opportunities, and to create an environment that cultivates teachers' confidence and provides comparable amounts of teaching practice to all teachers.

Für meine Eltern. Ohne eure Unterstützung wäre mein merkwürdiger Weg durchs Leben nie möglich gewesen. Danke für alles. Ich hoffe, ich habe euch stolz gemacht.

For my parents. Without your support, my strange journey would never have been possible. Thank you for everything. I hope I have made you proud.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I want to thank my dissertation adviser, Dr. Paula Winke, who guided me through my PhD and whose reassurance was crucial to my maintaining a semblance of sanity while writing this dissertation. Furthermore, I would like to thank my other committee members, Drs. Peter De Costa, Shawn Loewen, and Susan Gass, for their time, flexibility, and valuable feedback over the last two years. I am especially grateful to Dr. De Costa for giving me the opportunity to share my work with some of the brightest minds in the field.

I must also extend my eternal gratitude to my participants whose willingness to let me partake in their journey made this thesis possible. I am also thankful to the instructors in the MATESOL program for allowing me into their classrooms and for being as helpful as they were.

Among the friends I have made during my time at MSU, my special thanks for their continuous support go to Kimi Nakatsukasa, Scott Sterling, Ann Chrapkiewicz, Hannah Klautke, Jake Reed, Chris Garth, Lorena Valmori, Cristen Vernon, Mostafa Papi, Dustin Crowther, Luke Plonsky, and Baburhan Uzum. I also do not want to forget my good friends elsewhere: Holger Beck, Michael Dwyer, Sandy Carr, Josh and Minori Bouchard, Kaneshka Musleh, and Lars, Christine, and Daria Schneider. My life is so much richer because you are all in it.

I would like to thank members of my family for their unwavering support even though they did not get to see me much. A special thank you goes to my parents, Friedhelm and Gabi Wolff, for putting up with my strange life trajectory. My sister Nicole, her husband Claudius, and my two nephews Finn and Linus, for their support but also for keeping my parents busy and allowing me to do my thing three thousand miles from home. Further thanks to my proud Oma Luise, Bettina, Uwe, and the Baade family. Last but certainly not least, Stephanie. I love you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CLT: Communicative language teaching

EFL: English as a foreign language

ESL: English as a second language

L1: first language

L2: second language

LNG: Language class code

MATESOL: Master of Arts Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

N(E)ST: native (English) speaking teacher

NN(E)ST: non-native (English) speaking teacher

NS: native speaker or native speaking

NNS: non-native speaker or non-native speaking

PhD: Doctor of Philosophy

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, English has cemented its status as a global language (Crystal, 2003, 2012) with the numbers of speakers of English as a second language (ESL) rising steadily. Accordingly, a large majority of English teachers worldwide are now NNSs of the English language (about 80%, according to Canagarajah, 1999). Partially due to this development, U.S. MATESOL programs have seen and promoted an influx of graduate students who hail from non-English speaking countries. This increase of NNS graduate students has steadily transformed the demographics of MATESOL programs in the United States to the point where it is not rare that about half of all enrolled TESOL graduate students are foreign, NNS students. (For example, in the program under study, only two of the ten students enrolled in that year's Practicum were NSs.) In spite of this trend, NNESTs have only become a focus of teacher preparation research in the last ten to fifteen years. More importantly, the historically powerful notion of the NS model, a language proficiency standard for learners and teachers to which to aspire, has lingered in the form of an "underlying monolingual bias in the field [of English language teaching]" (Mahboob, 2010b, p. xiii) . This bias may act as a powerful adversary for the creation of new approaches toward language teaching and a real acceptance of language teachers from non-native contexts.

This qualitative multiple-case study traces the development of four teachers' selves (two NSs and two NNSs) during their first year in a U.S. MATESOL program. Identity in general and teacher identity in particular have been studied in some form for many decades. Accordingly, definitions of the term *teacher identity* vary to some degree, but usually contain an element of how a teacher views him or herself in relation to their work as a teacher. *Selves*, as I will explain in more detail later, are various instantiations of a part of teacher's identity that combine to form

his or her overall teacher identity. For example, a teacher might have created multiple selves for different teaching contexts, such as when he or she teaches his or her L1 or L2 in a foreign or a second language context. Tracing the trajectories of the emerging teacher selves of both NS and NNS teachers is particularly informative and important to find out how similarly or differently the paths of both speaker groups are as they go through the first half of the same teacher preparation program. Research has traditionally focused on only one of the groups, and longitudinal research into language teacher development continues to be lacking. While the NS/NNS issue was an important factor in this study, I made every attempt not to reduce my participants to their speaker status. Instead, I took into account their individuality as well as past experiences and future goals. This resulted in rich narratives for each teacher and cross-comparisons between them that took into account their individual experiences with the MATESOL curriculum, their teaching practices, and their views of their MATESOL experience as a whole.

Motivation for the present study

My primary motivation for the study stems from over a decade of my own experience teaching. As a NNS of English, I tutored high school students in my native country of Germany for three years before teaching English to adults in Japan and Spain for a number of years. During that time, I became aware of the roles status and power play in English language teaching. In Japan, the above-mentioned NS model was universally accepted and quite openly promoted. For example, language schools in their advertisements routinely pointed out that only NSs need apply. The only job I, as a fluent NNS with a background in English linguistics and years of English tutoring experience, was able to obtain was a teaching job that paid poorly,

involved up to eleven hours of teaching a day, and came without any job guarantees or benefits. Even so, as I found out later, students at this *eikaiwa* (literally, English conversation school) were told that the NNSs who worked there were indeed NSs. (For example, I was apparently from the United States.) The few NSs who taught at this school were doing so to add to their substantial salary from regular eikaiwa jobs. (These were Monday-Friday jobs with better hours, benefits, and a guaranteed salary that was about twice as much as the non-guaranteed salary I could hope for at my school.) One of the most impactful events that may well have been an initial trigger for my eventual interest in the NS/NNS issue came when I attended the eikaiwa's mandatory three-day training. It turned out that neither the teacher trainers (all NSs) nor the other NS teachers had any idea about how to teach English, nor did they have any particular linguistic skills. Still, their NS privilege, which had nothing to do with any actual teaching knowledge, afforded them a place at the top of the English-teaching hierarchy. As a NNS, on the other hand, I would have remained at the bottom of this hierarchy if I had stayed in Japan. Many years later, this experience still exerts an influence on my work as a researcher and it has caused me to explore the NS/NNS issue in teacher development. Moreover, through my work alongside MATESOL graduate students, I have become interested in what factors affect individual teachers as they develop teacher-selves in the MATESOL context. Above all, I hope this research will help locate potential weaknesses (and find solutions for these weaknesses) in the preparation of all language teachers in MATESOL programs and other teacher education settings.

<p align="center">Organization of the study</p>

In chapter 2, I begin my literature review with a brief history of language teacher research. From there, I move on to previous studies on general teacher development and prior

research that has more specifically focused on teacher identity development. Next, I cover issues surrounding the topic of NNSs in language teaching by reviewing publications that have dealt with the matter in recent years. I conclude the literature review by situating the present study within past work on teacher identity development and, particularly, the impact speaker status has in language teacher education.

After situating my study within the literature, I turn to the methodology of my study in chapter 3. I begin this chapter with an introduction of the four participants by providing autobiographical information for each of them. This is followed by a section that offers an overview of the context, the MATESOL program, in which the study took place. I continue with detailed descriptions of the two-class sequence (methods and practicum) the participants completed during their first year in the program using information from course syllabi and materials as reference points. Next, I situate myself as the researcher and discuss how my relationships with the participants and my previous experience as a language teacher have informed my interpretation of the data. The chapter concludes with an outline and description of each of the various data sources, their analysis, and the theoretical frameworks I used as lensed through which to view the data.

In chapters 4 and 5, I present the findings for each of the four participants in the form of chronological narratives. These narratives feature excerpts to exemplify some of the developments that occurred during the year and, at the same time, give a voice to the participants. Additionally, at the end of chapter 4, I will compare and discuss the trajectories of the two NNS participants. Chapter 5 concludes with a comparison and discussion of the two NS teachers, as well as a comparison of the teacher-self-development of all four participants.

While the previous two chapters contain a fair amount of discussion, chapter 6 continues

and narrows down this discussion by linking the findings to prior research and the MATESOL curriculum. Another section is devoted to the potential implications of this research study for language teacher preparation programs. Lastly, I conclude this thesis with a segment that covers the limitations of this study and lays out potential avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter I review the research on language teacher education, development, and identity. I begin with a brief historical overview of research on language teacher education and I summarize how identity has been approached in fields close to Applied Linguistics. Then, I narrow my focus to research on NNSTs, which has increased over the last two decades.

A recent history of research on language teacher education and identity

The past two decades have seen an abundance of research into language teacher education and preparation. Most recently, books (e.g. Crookes, 2003; Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Tedick, 2005; Tsui, 2007) and a wealth of research articles have been devoted to understanding issues surrounding the education and preparation of language teachers from various perspectives (for overviews, see Borg, 2003; Borg, 2006; Freeman, 2002; Richards, 2008). Traditionally, the study of teacher education and preparation has been housed in the field of applied linguistics (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1997; Crandall, 2000), and understandably so because applied linguistics was and is the field that is predominantly concerned with language teaching. Recently, however, the influence of the field of education on language teacher preparation has increased and, as a consequence, over time, it has begun to inform theories about language teaching and, hence, the role of teachers. Previously, as explained by SLA researchers influenced by work in general education, teachers were solely looked upon as the provider of the kind of instruction that causes certain mental processes to take place in students' minds, which in turn results in learning (Freeman, 2002; for a review of this type of research, see Carlsen, 1991). In his theoretically oriented article that framed language teaching as a sociocultural activity,

Cross (2010) pointed toward a "dominance of behaviorist and cognitive domains in SLA" as a reason for the view that there exist "methodological 'blueprints'" for language teaching (p.434). If those blueprints are followed, learning can and will occur, leaving for the teacher only the role of a technician using the right methods (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005) at the right time. Fortunately, over the last 25 years, this view has for the most part been replaced by a more realistic and inclusive perspective that takes into account the socio-cultural and individual dimensions regarding the role of teachers in language teaching as well as the complexities of real classrooms (Allwright, 1988; Nunan, 1988). Thus, teachers are no longer seen as having a *blank slate* before being trained how to teach (Akbari & Dadvand, 2011). Instead, researchers and teacher trainers are increasingly recognizing the importance of teachers' *mental lives* (a term first coined by the education researcher Walberg, 1977) as well as their prior knowledge and the role of the social and institutional context (Freeman, 2002) and other factors, such as gender, race, and culture (e.g., Amin, 1999; Kubota & Lin, 2009). It is clear that teachers, through the experience of teaching, develop a teacher identity both in a psychological and a social sense; however, for some reason, language teacher identity and, particularly, its development is one of the more understudied areas of language teacher education research. Few researchers have longitudinally investigated the development of such identities in the same individuals (Kanno & Stuart, 2011) and direct comparisons of this identity development between NESTs and NNESTs have been limited.

Teacher education and teacher (identity) development

Freeman and Johnson (1998) contended that language teacher education is something that is more frequently done than studied. There is some truth to this statement in that language

teachers are being trained across the globe every day, yet a fundamental understanding of the role teacher education plays in shaping the way these teachers end up teaching appears to be missing. Of course, the idea behind language teacher education (also often referred to as teacher training or teacher preparation) is that teachers, through training, are given a skill set that allows them to pass on their own knowledge about a particular subject to learners and to further deal with a variety of situations that may come up in the process of teaching. But more occurs beyond that. Crandall (2000) (with reference to Bailey, 1992; Flowerdew, Brock, & Hsia, 1992; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Sachs, Brock, & Lo, 1996) claimed that "neither traditional education nor training are sufficient; also needed are opportunities for teachers to reflect upon their beliefs and practices and to construct and reconstruct their personal theories of language teaching and learning" (p. 37). As stated earlier, beginning teachers are not blank slates and any training and knowledge resulting from training "becomes instantiated only after it has been integrated into the teacher's personal framework" (Rankin & Becker, 2006, p. 366). Furthermore, as Mann (2005), referencing Miller (2004) and Johnston (2003), pointed out, there are discrepancies between how teacher development is viewed from European and American perspectives. While the European definition of the term focuses more on the individual teacher personally navigating this development, the American view predominantly sees the teacher educator, the person presenting *good teaching*, in the dominant role. As discussed earlier, the literature on this topic appears to favor the 'European perspective' in that becoming a teacher is described as more complex than merely receiving teaching knowledge from a teacher educator. Individual variables of all sorts play a role in teacher development and teachers are aware of these changes as seen in studies that use interviews and teachers' reflections as data (e.g., Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Tsui, 2007).

    Over the last twenty years, research on teacher identity has primarily been non-

essentialist in nature, i.e., the dominant view has been that concepts such as 'identity' and 'culture' are changeable rather than stable. In this vein, Ha (2008)emphasized "dynamic change, hybridity, fragmentation, and multiplicity" as well as the idea that identities are ever changing and about "'becoming' rather than 'being'" (p.12). The idea of multiplicity, or multiple identities, plays a key role in non-SLA (i.e., traditional teacher education) research on teachers' identities. For example, Beijaard, Verlop, and Vermunt (2000) identified three sub-identities by which definition teachers may alternatively be labeled as subject matter experts, pedagogical experts, or didactical experts. Similarly, teacher identity is described as an ongoing process in teacher education in Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop's (2004) review of the literature on teachers' professional identity. Citing Gee (2001), the authors define identity development as "an ongoing process, a process of interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person and being recognized as such in a given context". Thus identity is the answer to the recurrent question: "Who am I at this moment?" (p.108).

Research on identity has been popular in the social sciences and humanities (Bendle, 2002) and education (Gee, 2001), so it comes as little surprise that Applied Linguistics and, particularly, its sub-strand SLA have followed suit. Much of the investigation of identity in SLA has focused on learners' identities (Block, 2007; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Norton & Toohey, 2011) but, nevertheless, a substantial amount of research has been undertaken at the intersection of SLA and teacher education in recent years (Clarke, 2009; Park, 2012). Morgan and Clarke (2011) gave a comprehensive overview on the concept of identity in second language teaching and learning. This overview covers a broad range of identity-related issues, forming a bridge from topics such as the Foucaldian definitions of agency and power to the simplistic use of identities (NNS vs. NS) in most SLA and Applied Linguistics research. With regards to teacher

identity formation, the authors "recognize the complicated implicated nature of knowledge, power, and identity" which makes "language teacher identity [...] a potential site of pedagogical intervention and an area of explicit focus in teacher preparation" (Morgan & Clarke, 2011, p. 825).

Danielewicz (2001), in the field of general teacher education, promoted the importance of discourse for the process of teacher identity development. In her book, *Teaching Selves: Identity, Pedagogy, and Teacher Education* (2001), she traced the teacher identity development of six undergraduate teacher education majors over several years. She claimed that not only the discursive acts of the individual affect identity development, but other pre-existing discourses, such as particular discourse types connected to the social setting, do as well. Based on that, she called for a pedagogical approach that fosters positive identity development and allows teachers to participate in multiple types of discourses as they continuously negotiate their own identities.

Alsup (2006) in her book on the teacher identity discourses of six pre-service teachers used longitudinal data from three genres: teachers' stories or narratives, teaching metaphors, and philosophical statements of teaching. She stressed the importance of teachers' participation in the transformative identity discourse as she sought to create "a theory about the intersection of various types of discourse within the process of professional identity development" (p.4). Alsup clearly believed in the central importance of having or forming a healthy teacher identity as the backbone of becoming a teacher. Based on her findings, she concluded the book with a number of assignments teacher educators can utilize to guide novice teachers' identity development. These suggested assignments would use the three genres (narratives, metaphor, and philosophical statements) at various times during and after the teacher education program.

The longitudinal development of teachers' identities, particularly during a teacher

preparation program which is at the center of this study, has thus far received limited attention in language teacher research. Nonetheless, the results of studies which have attempted to understand the effect of language teacher training on teaching behavior in the classroom have been intriguing.

Early on, research focused on the effects of training on teacher practice. Freeman (1996), in a study involving four foreign language teachers, found that training as part of a Master's degree program affected teacher practice in some aspects but not others. Freeman concluded that teacher education has to be understood as a mere piece of the puzzle when it comes to the development of a teacher's teaching style and identity.

After Freeman, researchers investigating language teacher development began to examine background factors that impacted teacher development, and they identified important mental transitions that appeared to occur during teacher-training programs. In an ethnographic study on teacher development, Duff and Uchida (1997) examined how sociocultural identities and practices developed and changed over time for four EFL teachers (two Japanese and two American) in Japan and what factors caused these changes. They found that the teachers' professional, social, political, and cultural identities were clearly represented in their classroom behaviors and practices. Duff and Uchida noted that "[L]anguage teachers and students in any setting naturally represent a wide array of social and cultural roles and identities" (p. 451).

Other researchers uncovered that, as part of their identity development, teachers at some point make a conscious transition from being first and foremost a student to being a teacher (Danielewicz, 2001). All teachers were previously students and, thus, have to make the mental and, arguably, cultural switch to their new role or identity in the same setting, that is, the classroom.

11

Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) argued for a use of multiple theoretical frameworks to capture the development of teacher's identities over time. Specifically, they urged identity to be approached from two perspectives, as "identities-in discourse" and "identities-in practice" (p. 39). In simple terms, identity research should not only depend on the reflexive relationship between teachers' developing identities and the language they use to describe them (in discourse), but also how they enact their identities in the classroom, for example, during particular tasks or using particular methods (in practice). They therefore called for future research on teacher development to include observations of teaching practice as well as the use of questionnaires and interviews to capture teacher development and identity formation in action from both perspectives.

Since then, a few studies in this area of research have investigated the long-term development of a teacher identity among beginning teachers. Liu and Fisher (2006) followed three student-teachers in Britain over a period of nine months during which all participants reported consistently positive changes in their teacher identity. This study's focus is an example for identities-in-discourse as the findings relied solely on the participants' reflections about their identity development, which in turn may have affected said development as well. Similarly, Tsui (2007), in a case study of one Chinese EFL teacher (and learner) in China using interviews and reflective diaries, retroactively covered a six-year span of that individual's development, tracking the many social and personal struggles he faced in juggling multiple identities in this particular community. A limitation of this study was that all data were collected retrospectively, thus obscuring the actual development over time and allowing in revised thoughts years after the fact. More recently, in a longitudinal two-case study of beginning (both NS) teachers in an MATESOL program, Kanno and Stuart (2011) found a relationship between the development of

12

these teachers' identities and their classroom practices. Both of their participants took until their second class (out of three that were part of the data set) to see themselves as teachers rather than students. A negative effect of this transformation was that the two teachers simultaneously also became more critical of their students and were less enthusiastic about teaching. Based on these findings, which were revealed in the teachers' discourse and practice, Kanno and Stuart called for the inclusion of a better understanding of identity development in L2 teacher education. Their approach heeded Varghese et al. (2005) who similarly called for a focus on both narrated identities as well as enacted identities; teachers' identities in the classroom may not always correspond to how they view themselves when they reflect on their practices.

Increasingly, narratives, such as life histories or other types of reflections, are considered a valuable tool in teacher preparation as well as in teacher research (Barkhuizen, 2008, 2010; Curtis & Romney, 2006; Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Johnson & Golombek, 2002). Barkhuizen's (2008) research of South African immigrants who were working as teachers in New Zealand serves as an example for both. The interviews the author had conducted ended up resembling conversations with the participants and frequently took the form of stories containing the three key elements of characters in interaction, time, and place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Not only did these stories yield interesting findings about the teachers' individual journeys, but each of them benefitted from "the telling, re-telling, and interpretation of their stories" which further allowed them to make sense of their everyday experiences (Barkhuizen, 2008, p.238).

In a similar vein, Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) argued for the importance of a vision for teachers' future selves which could be a key focus in language teacher training curricula. To that end, they offered tasks and exercises which, when made part of teacher training classes,

13

could help novice teachers stay true to the original visions they have for themselves "in the face of detrimental ought-to self-images" (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 145). They also pointed to identity as a key construct in teachers' evolution. Using a quote by Palmer, they posited that "good teaching comes from identity, not technique", elevating the importance of knowing who one is as a teacher above the knowledge of teaching technique or skills. Nonetheless, in Palmer's view, identity may positively impact technique and, hence, allow a teacher's identity to be more suitably conveyed (Palmer, 2007, p. 66).

Kubanyiova, in her previous book *Teacher development in action – Understanding language teachers' conceptual change* (2012), had lamented that "teacher identity does not seem to have made it into the teacher cognition repertoire of key constructs" although it is understood "that teachers' cognitions cannot be separated from identity formation" (p. 24). Kubanyiova frequently used terms, such as *actual self, ideal self,* and *ought to self* from Higgins' (1987) self-discrepancy theory. In SLA, this theory had previously been adapted for the L2 motivation framework (e.g.,Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), first in student-learning and later in work on language teachers (Kubanyiova, 2009). The appeal of this framework for research on teacher identity formation is understandable as terms such as *ideal self* are not restrained by any current version of a teacher's identity but rather aim to illuminate possible change.

NNSs in teacher cognition research

Because it is important to understand the development of ESL teachers as teachers, and because most ESL teachers today are NNSs of English (Graddol, 1999, 2006; J. Liu, 1999), applied linguists need to understand better NNSs' processes and patterns of teacher development. NNESTs have deservedly received more attention in recent years, particularly in thanks to a few

edited books that focused exclusively on them (Braine, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 2004; Llurda, 2005aa). However, in spite of their ubiquity, research on NNS in English teaching did not receive any attention until Philippson's radical examination of the native speaker fallacy in his book entitled *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992). Shortly thereafter, Peter Medgyes (1994) followed up with his seminal book, *The non-native teacher*, which marked a first step in examining the differences between NESTs and NNESTs. Since the appearance of these two ground-breaking volumes, it still took almost a decade for interest in NNEST research to increase. However, since the turn of the century and with numbers of and demand for English teachers and learners continually rising on a global scale, investigations into the different aspects of the non-native teacher have at last become more widespread.

While there has been a lack of longitudinal investigations of their teacher identity development, NNESTs have been the focus of a substantial amount of research since 1999. Much of the research on teacher identity has focused on the perceived identities of NS and NNS teachers by students, administrators, and themselves in various contexts. Generally, this research has relied on self-reported data at one point in time rather than development over time. Some of the findings from various contexts are reviewed next.

In an investigation of prevalent challenges NNS professionals in TESOL face, J. Liu (1999) collected and analyzed e-mail and personal interviews with seven NNESTs over a period of 16 months. One key finding was that participants thought that language competence (rather than country of origin) should be what defines a person as a NS. J. Liu further found problematic the fact that three of his participants, who were fully competent in English (at the level of native speakers), accepted the label of NNS. He contended that this perpetuated the notion that it is acceptable to "discriminate against individuals whose pronunciation might be slightly different

from that of NSs of English" (p. 96).

　　Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) investigated 17 NNS TESOL graduate students with a focus on (a) their self-perceptions, particularly with regard to native vs. non-native issues, and (b) their thoughts on whether being either a NS or NNS influenced their teaching behavior. They collected data by giving the 17 students a questionnaire, by observing the students' classroom discussions, by conducting interviews, and by gathering autobiographical accounts of the participating NNS graduate students. In contrast to previous studies, they found that "most of the participants did not feel particularly disadvantaged in their work as EFL teachers because of the non-nativeness" (p. 138). Once the focus was shifted to an ESL context, however, conflicts began to surface for many participants. The difference the participants perceived between their status in their home countries (where they were EFL teachers) and their status as graduate students in the U.S. came up frequently in interviews. Many of the participants offered that they began to doubt their identity as English-language speakers and professionals after arrival. In addition, the questionnaire responses showed that the participants did not believe there was a superior versus inferior relationship between the NS and NNS teachers. Rather, these graduate students (who were also teachers) pointed toward a complex interaction between multiple teacher, learner, and contextual factors, all of which played a vastly more important role than what label was given to the teacher with regards to his or her nativeness.

　　Some of the research investigating the perceptions of NNS and NS teachers has relied on quantitative research methods. For example, Moussu (2006) explored the attitudes of administrators and ESL students toward NESTs and NNESTs in an Intensive English Program at a U.S. university. She gave questionnaires to ESL students twice per term, once on the first day of the class and once on the last day of the class, about fourteen weeks later. The students' initial

attitudes toward NNESTs were neither very positive nor very negative but had become much more positive by the end of the term. Also, negative attitudes were not necessarily due to a teacher's non-nativeness per se, but were rather influenced by other variables such as the teacher's first language. Administrators in an open-ended questionnaire on hiring practices and beliefs about NNESTs expressed that by and large they thought NNESTs' ability to teach was similar to that of NESTs.

Llurda's (2005a) investigative focus was likewise TESOL students, but he took a different approach with a survey targeting not the NNS students themselves but rather their program supervisors. Thirty-two North American departments offering TESOL degree programs participated, 27 of which were MA programs. (The remaining five housed undergraduate programs.) All of the programs featured a teaching practicum which gave the supervisors ample experience with observations of beginning NS and NNS students' teaching. The author found that 78% of the surveyed NNS were planning to return to their home countries, a number similar to the 90% reported by Polio (1994) in a smaller scale study of seven universities. Llurda (2005b) also revealed that most of the NNS (72%) in these 32 programs came from Asian countries. The survey showed that supervisors only judged NNSs to perform better or equal to NSs in the category of 'language awareness'. Furthermore, the participants thought that almost half of the NNSs had equal listening comprehension skills to the NSs whereas an additional 38% fell into the category 'Good but not equivalent to NS'. For all other skills, there were clear differences with higher scores for NSs than NNSs on average, that is, while some NNSs were considered as skilled as the NSs, a majority was not. This finding extended to the students' teaching abilities as well. While the teaching performance of 72% of NNSs was deemed to be qualitatively the same as NS, the supervisors were only confident that 62% of the NNSs could

successfully teach advanced classes (for lower levels this number was around 90%). Llurda (2005a) concluded that only about a quarter of the NNS students might be considered "extremely fluent speakers that one might compare to NSs" (p.143) while about half of the NNSs were considered proficient, but not native-like, and thus more representative of NNS teachers in EFL contexts.

Two other studies in Llurda (2005b) explored students' perceptions of NNESTs in two distinct contexts: While Benke and Medgyes (2005) conducted a questionnaire on the perception of NESTs and NNESTs with 422 Hungarian-speaking students of English, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) used a mixed-methods questionnaire to investigate the preferences of 76 Basque students. Participants' answers in both studies characterized NESTs and NNESTs as groups with certain advantages and disadvantages. For instance, while NESTs have an advantage in language use, NNESTs were seen as better at grammar teaching and had the added advantage of being able to put themselves in the learners' shoes. Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) also found a strong preference for NESTs among EFL students in a university setting. Overall, however, a combination of NESTs and NNESTs seemed to be the preferred option. Benke and Medgyes (2005) concluded that "[a]n overwhelming majority of the respondents argued that in an ideal situation both NS and NNS teachers should be available to teach them, stressing that they would be ill-prepared to dispense with the services of either group" (p. 208).

Pacek (2005), in the same edited volume, shared findings of her survey-based case study that investigated the perceptions two groups of international students had of their experienced Eastern European NNEST in an ESL context. While students usually do expect a NEST when they take English classes in an English-speaking country, a large portion of students had a positive or mixed reaction to the teacher with only a few outright negative ones. In addition,

many students' negative estimation changed to positive ones over time. In contrast to the author's hypothesis, gender and age did not play a significant role in whether the teacher was perceived positively or negatively. Pacek concluded that, at least in this case, personality trumped nationality.

In a similar vein, Ellis (2004) qualitatively investigated the effect of teachers' speaker status on their teaching beliefs and knowledge by comparing three groups: NNS teachers of English, bi- or multilingual NS teachers of English, and monolingual NS teachers of English. She found that the bi-/multilingual groups had more linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge to draw on during their teaching and that their vaster language learning experience served to solidify their beliefs about teaching. Ellis concluded that the amount and variety of a teacher's language learning experience may have a greater effect than their NS or NNS status.

In a Canadian context, Amin's (2001, 2004) focal participants were eight minority immigrant women who were also ESL teachers in Canada. From her interviews with the participants, she found out that these minority immigrant female teachers were perceived as NNS of "Canadian English" due to the fact they belonged to a racial minority. Nevertheless, the women viewed themselves as effective English teachers in no small part due to their previous experiences as English language learners. Based on her findings, Amin called for a reconceptualization of the NS norms in the Canadian context. The discrimination these women experienced was not only based on their ethnic background, but also their non-white accents, which, Amin argued constituted a new type of racism.

In another study using self-reported data, Inbar-Lourie (2005) examined the self- and ascribed identities of both NS and NNS EFL teachers in Israel. The sample consisted of 102 mostly female EFL teachers from seventeen countries about half of whom self-identified as NSs

(53%) and the other half as NNSs (47%). A questionnaire that included open-ended questions was used to find out similarities or differences between the teachers' self-ascribed and perceived NS/NNS identities. Data showed the largest gap between self- and perceived identities among NNSs of English, who other NNS as well as their students often perceived as NSs. Participants in an additional analysis were asked to account for the gap between self-ascription and perception of their speaker status. While many participants brought up accent and language knowledge as a reason to explain the gap, frequently explanations referenced the specific teaching context (here: EFL in Israel) pointing to a need to consider findings on the NS/NNS issue with reference to the characteristics of the specific teacher population under study.

Among the most recent work on NNESTs, Mahboob (2010a), in particular, tried to change the narrative and called for Applied Linguistics and TESOL to be viewed through what he called the NNEST lens, "a multilingual, multicultural, and multinational perspective that takes diversity as a starting point rather than as a result" (p.1).

Several entries in Mahboob's edited volume (2010b) made interesting contributions to the field of NNEST research. In an attempt to re-visit a fundamental question regarding NS and NNS teachers, "Who's worth more?" (Medgyes, 1992), Nemtchinova (2010) used a survey to investigate host teachers' opinions about MATESOL students they were paired with. The results, in contrast to Llurda (2005b), showed that NNESTs scored higher in cultural awareness (due to their shared common ground with students), while in all other categories no statistical differences between NESTs and NNESTs were found. In a similar earlier study (Nemtchinova, 2005) which used a more qualitatively oriented questionnaire, host teachers had been critical of some NNESTs' English language skills, while maintaining that the NNESTs were able teach efficiently nonetheless and were a welcome addition to the world of English teaching. In a

thematically related study that used interviews with in-service teachers as well as journals as data sources, Tatar and Yildiz (2010) similarly reported that NNEST participants were aware that their shared cultural and linguistic background was an asset in Turkish EFL classrooms; in fact, NESTs who did not speak the L1 frequently complained about discipline issues in their classes. These findings give further support to the common belief that NNESTs are better prepared to deal with the complexities of multicultural ESL classrooms (Braine, 2004; Kamhi-Stein, 2005; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999).

Shifting the focus to teacher development programs in Mahboob's volume (2010a), Nemtchinova, Mahboob, Eslami, and Dogancay-Aktuna (2010) criticized that most TESOL programs focus solely on teacher education and completely disregard promoting NNS students' language development needs. The authors assert that although these students obviously received a high score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language prior to being admitted, vast differences in academic proficiency and fluency between different students often persist. By not addressing NNESTs' concerns about language proficiency, the status quo of the *inferior* NNS is constantly reinforced. Nemtchinova et al. provide examples for techniques that could be used to improve NNESTs linguistic proficiency and pragmatic competence while noting the difficulty of integrating such techniques into an already packed curriculum.

In another recent and related study, Park (2012) qualitatively investigated the transformation of one NNEST's teacher identity in a TESOL program. Her Chinese participant, Xia (pseudonym) showed a rich and, most of all, complex identity development, which Park traced using an autobiographical narrative as her main data source. Xia's experience in a U.S. MATESOL program allowed her to reconstruct and eventually embrace her identity as a NNEST. Park concluded with a call for an inclusion of teachers' life histories in TESOL

programs because such "insights could assist TESOL programs in (re)conceptualizing their curricula, meeting the demands of their graduates seeking teaching jobs throughout the world" (p. 142).

Xu (2013) longitudinally studied the transformation of four Chinese EFL teachers' *imagined* identities into *practiced* identities (Anderson, 2006; Norton, 2001; Wenger, 1998) as they transitioned from their teacher education program to a real-life teaching context. For three of the four participants their imagined identities were supplanted by different practiced identities, mostly due to institutional pressures, such as rules and regulations in the school they worked at. In simpler terms, they became different types of teachers than they originally wanted to be to fit into their teaching context. One of the participants, however, withstood such a change. While the institutional pressures were similar for her, she displayed an extraordinary sense of agency (Gao, 2010), which allowed her to develop professionally more closely to her ideal self (Dörnyei, 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). Based on these findings, Xu (2013) identified two major implications. First, ESL teacher educators should make a conscious effort to encourage a critical examination of their imagined identities as well as imagined communities of practice. Secondly, teacher educators should expressively stress the importance of agency and perseverance when they train future teachers to allow them to transform their own professional identities in a positive and effective manner.

For a more complete picture, studies in teacher development with NNSTs of languages other than English are also of interest, but have unfortunately been rare. In one such study Thompson and Fioramonte (2012) explored NNS Spanish teaching assistants by having them "reveal their experiences as both language learners and teachers by reflecting on their past and present experiences and imagining their future selves as teachers" using semi-structured

interviews over a course of six months (p. 569). The terms *identity* as well as any direct reference to possible selves theory, the framework most frequently associated with future selves, were notably absent. Focusing on identity-in-discourse, for this study, the interviews participants were directly asked about different topics related to their NNST status. In their analysis, the researchers focused on three themes which emerged from the data. The themes dealt with (1) the teachers' insistence that mistakes (both by students and teachers) are normal and even desirable in the language classroom, (2) pronunciation issues, and (3) the perception of advanced teaching abilities. Interestingly, the three teachers' answers converged on these themes despite the fact that all of them came from diverse backgrounds (e.g., L1s, previous education, age). Through an analysis of the interview data, the researchers showed the prevalence of stereotypes about NNSTs among the students as well as the teachers themselves. Native-like pronunciation was particularly pointed to as a factor that will affect whether a NNST is granted access to the exclusive "club" (p.575) while non-pronunciation mistakes may be more easily forgiven. Thompson and Fioramonte concluded by calling for measures that might reduce the stereotypes that NNSTs face. Examples included raising more awareness with regards to language diversity and explicitly discussing descriptive vs. prescriptive grammar in language classes. Finally, the authors suggested that language students should be urged to aim for a level of language competence similar to that of their NNSTs (rather than a NS-like level of proficiency). NNSTs' language competence and metalinguistic awareness should represent a model to strive for instead of criticize as deficient in the manner often done in NS vs. NNS debates. However, a limitation of this study is its lack of triangulation, particularly the absence of class observations to complement the interview data.

       Most recently, the NNS issue has slowly become a mainstay in language teacher identity

research. Several contributors to Cheung, Said, and K. Park's (2015) edited volume entitled "Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research" touched on the unique ways in which language teachers' non-native status may affect their development. I review the two most relevant contributions next.

In tackling an understudied area in teacher research, Reis (2015) explored the relevance of emotions for NNESTs' development, particularly the negative effects of insecurities related to their status as NNSs. Reis argues that "if ESL/EFL students at large repeatedly encounter ESL/EFL teachers whose practices are heavily influenced by their fears and insecurities, the vicious cycle of powerlessness in face of the NS myth is likely to continue" (p.34). To combat these negative effects of harmful emotions, Reis argued for a reflective and collaborative approach among NNS TESOL practitioners that would allow NNESTs to identify, acknowledge, and, eventually, regulate their affective responses, thus leading to a healthier and better workforce in TESOL.

De Costa's (2015) longitudinal case study of a South Korean female student, Natasha, in an MATESOL program in the United States traced her professional development through an investigation of her spoken and written narratives (interviews and journal reflections). Using this narrative approach, De Costa focused on the role of reflexivity, particularly regarding how "both teacher identity and teaching practice are inextricably linked as identity formation and practice support each other in a symbiotic manner" (p. 136). Following the participating teacher's shifting identities in the course of the study, De Costa concluded "that unlike other novice teachers, Natasha was provided with the professional infrastructure both during and after her graduate program to partake in reflexive thinking" (p.145). Interestingly, Natasha who taught both as a NNS (in the US) and a NS (Korean), over time realized that factors other than her nativeness, for

example, her class preparation, might be crucial to her self-evaluation as a good teacher.

In my own previous study (under review), I added to the existing research on NS and NNS teachers of English by longitudinally comparing the initial teacher identity development of novice NS and NNS teachers. I followed the suggestions by Varghese et al. (2005) to explore development through introspective (in-discourse) and observational (in-practice) methods. I also followed Park (2012) in conducting rich, longitudinal research by investigating two beginning teachers (one male NS from the United States and one female NNS from China) during and after their practicum semester (for a total of 10 months) in an MATESOL program at a U.S. university. In the study I researched how training and L1 background impacted teacher development and identity construction. I focused on: (a) what factors influenced these teachers' identity developments, and (b) whether there was a fundamental difference between NS and NNS teacher identity development. The data in my study came from (a) individualized, semi-structured interviews with each participant before, during, and immediately after their teaching practicum, as well as six months after the practicum's conclusion, (b) stimulated recall interviews (verbal reports) during the practicum, (c) class observations, and (d) the participants' teaching journals. I analyzed the data using a general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006) and found that, although both participants received the same teaching preparation, they framed their identity development quite differently. Their native or non-native speaker status played an important role in how they perceived themselves as teachers within their cohort and in the classroom. While the NS teacher taught his ESL practicum class confidently largely due to his status, the NNS struggled to view herself as an ESL teacher at all. These roles were reversed when, after the practicum, the NNS taught her native language Chinese and the English NS was the instructor of a literature/content class. At that point, the NNS (of English) felt more

25

comfortable and confident due to her NS status in Chinese and the NS (of English) felt like his advantage had disappeared and teaching had become more challenging. Pedagogical or content knowledge, however, did not appear to have any effect on how the teachers viewed themselves in the different teaching contexts. Based on these findings, I suggested that novice teachers' backgrounds and self-perceptions warrant a larger role in language teacher training curricula. Furthermore, language teacher identity development research should directly compare the development of NS and NNS teachers to identify the differences that can be traced back to their speaker status and other dimensions of their burgeoning, professional identities. These differences could then better inform language teacher preparation and help (beginning) teachers as they try to establish their professional identities in and outside of the classroom.

The NS/NNS dichotomy

Phillipson (1992) coined the term *native speaker fallacy* which was henceforth used to refer the belief that NSs are considered the inherently better teachers of a language. Undoubtedly, Noam Chomsky's claim that only NSs are the true models for language proficiency has played a significant role in creating the myth of the superior native speaker teacher. Chomsky strictly distinguished between linguistic competence and performance, that is, an ideal speaker-hearer's linguistics knowledge and their ability to produce it in speech unencumbered by outside factors, such as memory problems or other non-grammar-related issues (Chomsky, 1965; Evans & Green, 2006). As such, this purely cognitive view of language speakers' competence negates the influence of any socio-cultural aspects in language learning. Furthermore, the concept of performance denies any importance one could ascribe to a speaker's enacted linguistic and cultural identities. The myth created by this widely accepted

characterization of the ideal NS has impacted not only language learners but it has perpetuated the "deficit discourse" (Bhatt, 2002) and, thus, the perception of countless NNS teachers worldwide.

Moussu and Llurda's (2008) review of the history and research of NNESTs provided an overview of research done on NNESTs in recent years. Most importantly, the authors also looked to the future and at what questions still most need answers. The present study tackles a number of these questions. Firstly, the individual variation among NNSs in the study played a crucial role in my investigation. The term NNS itself is fraught with problems because NNSs are often treated as an entire group and the term "does not identify any particular characteristic of this group except for the negation of their native speaker condition" (Moussu & Llurda, 2008, p. 337). This oversimplification of an entire group of speakers by the majority, the also somewhat simplified NSs, is at the heart of Holliday's (2005, 2008) often-used term 'native-speakerism', which results in making NNS an overly limiting and deficient label. Secondly, Moussu and Llurda decried a paucity of longitudinal work done with NNS teachers. One-shot designs and retrospective studies can merely hint at development, but only a multi-method longitudinal approach is likely to produce substantiated findings. Thirdly, much of the research up until now has not included classroom observations which are an important key to elucidating the difference between individual teachers and, possibly, the broadly defined groups of NNESTs and NESTs. These three shortcomings from previous research (investigating NS and NNS representatives as complex individuals rather than based on only one common feature; collecting longitudinal data to track actual development; including observational as well as reflective data sources) are addressed in the present study. Also, crucially, NNESTs and NESTs, rather than just one or the other, are part of the investigation at the same time. This allows for findings that compare based

27

on group membership (NS/NNS) but also highlight each participant's individual journey while they, at least on the surface, experience a similar training and preparation.

Research questions

The research questions that guided the present study were:

1. How do these four teachers' selves develop during their first year in the MATESOL program?

2. To what degree do the MA classes and teaching practice positively or negatively impact the four teachers' developing selves?

3. What role do the speaker status (NS/NNS) and other differences play in their development as teachers and their formation of their language teacher identity?

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This study is a case study. As a method of conducting research in applied linguistics, case studies have the "ability to exemplify larger processes or situations in a very accessible, concrete, immediate, and personal manner" (Duff, 2012, p. 96), and they allow complex phenomena to be researched over time (van Lier, 2005). Case study research provides a rich, in-depth analysis of a phenomenon where "the focus of study is the knowledge, performance, or perspectives of a single individual, such as a language learner or teacher" (Duff, 2013, p. 1). Case studies are often (but not exclusively) qualitative in nature and may include a variety of data collection methods, such as interviews, focus groups, observations, and a host of others. (I will explain my own data sources in detail later in this chapter.) A case-study approach represents a suitable methodology for the goals of this research: to trace English-language teachers' development over time and to present and explain findings that are accessible for academics and language teachers alike. In addition, the use of multiple cases allows for a cross comparison between different individuals' developmental trajectories over time.

Participants

Initially, I recruited seven of the eight first-year MA students enrolled in the teaching methods class as volunteers. After I conducted semi-structured interviews with each student, I identified the four focal participants who would also be enrolled in the practicum the following spring semester. These four participants were all female and two of them were NSs (from the United States) and two were NNSs (from South Asia and Eastern Europe, respectively). Below you can find brief introductions for each participant.

Maya

Maya was a 30-year old scholar and mother of two from a small south Asian country. This two-year study in the United States marked the first time that she had left her home country with the exception of short trips across the border to a neighboring country. Maya expressed gratitude and excitement about receiving a prestigious international scholarship and attending this particular MA program in the United States. As a female who grew up in a very traditional society her career options had always been limited. After an arranged marriage at the age of sixteen and the subsequent birth of her children, she was only allowed to pursue a career in English education in her hometown. Starting in high school, where she was the first female to graduate with the highest distinction, she had always excelled in her education. Previously, she had completed undergraduate and graduate (MA) degrees in English Education from the largest public university in her home country. In addition, she had taught numerous classes at the institution where she received her Master's degree, among them classes in English, Linguistics, Psycholinguistics, and Second Language Acquisition. Those classes routinely featured between 35 and 220 students, which is why her teaching style was more lecture-oriented. Sitting in graduate level classes with only a handful of students was a very new experience to her that she reflected about repeatedly. After her MA in TESOL, Maya originally wanted to immediately return to her old job at the university in her home country. Later in the study, however, she began seriously considering applying to PhD programs in North America. For this to happen, her family (which includes two young children) would be able to join her in the United States. During the first semester, Maya described her homesickness as excruciating, but she started feeling more adjusted during the second semester.

Katherine

The second participant, Katherine, is a Caucasian American female in her mid-20s who had come to the MA program after critically reflecting on her initial career choice and opting for a career in teaching instead. During her undergraduate degree at a Midwestern university, Katherine double-majored in Spanish and a type of communication degree (I am not providing the exact degree to protect her anonymity) and began tutoring English to a native Spanish speaker. Immediately upon graduation, she found a job in an advertising agency but she soon realized that she enjoyed teaching much more than her work in the advertising industry. To increase her chances to eventually be admitted to the MA program, she acquired an EFL teaching certificate before teaching for six months in a Spanish-speaking country where she had earlier spent time as a study-abroad student. Unlike Maya, Katherine did not have any experience with linguistics or related classes and her teaching experience prior to her MA was limited to her private tutoring and the work she did in the Spanish-speaking country (specifically, teaching high school students after school hours as well as young college students at a language academy). Katherine was concurrently teaching two classes per semester in the university's Intensive English Program in her role as an ESL teaching assistant. Because her second language was Spanish, this marked the first time that she did not have knowledge of her students' L1 while teaching them English. (Her students in the Intensive English Program were mostly L1 speakers of Chinese and Arabic.) For the future, Katherine envisioned herself as settling down in the United States to teach ESL in some capacity and this did not change in the course of the first year.

Natasha

Natasha was a 25-year old student from a former Soviet nation. In addition to Russian,

she spoke her country's official language natively, English fluently, German at an intermediate level, and Spanish at a high-beginner level. Since she was a teenager, it had been her dream to come to the United States. An English teacher she had throughout high school had inspired her love of the English language. Although she was originally not very interested in teaching, she did teach the language during her time at the university she attended in her homeland. There she also completed undergraduate (BA English Language and Literature) and graduate (MA English philology) degrees; additionally, she had recently begun a doctorate in Cognitive Linguistics. When she applied for a prestigious international scholarship, her initial plan was to pursue a PhD in Cognitive Linguistics in the United States, but her academic advisor warned her against it, saying she did not have the credentials to be admitted to a PhD program in the United States yet. Instead, he suggested that she should try for a teaching degree. From the beginning, Natasha presented herself as a very outgoing and supremely confident person, stating early on that as a child, her future aspiration was to be the president of her home country. Some political and social upheaval in her home country that started shortly after the beginning of the study unsurprisingly weighed on her mind and we often discussed her future in light of this situation. While she wanted to do a PhD in the United States, the requirement for holders of the aforementioned scholarship to go back to their home country for at least two years before starting a new degree would make this difficult. Like Maya, this graduate study marked the first visit to the United States for Natasha.

Rebecca

Rebecca was 28 years old at the beginning of the study and, like Katherine, a Caucasian American female who was born and raised in the Midwest. (Unlike Katherine, however, Rebecca grew up on the outskirts of a large city.) Having struggled for much of her time in high school

due to a learning disability, Rebecca entered a community college where she majored in English literature. Having received help at the college's writing center, she became interested in writing and was eventually hired as a student-worker at said writing center herself. At this point, she transferred to a major university where she completed her undergraduate degree in English literature with a minor in Sociology. Immediately after finishing this degree, Rebecca wanted to continue with a Master's degree in English literature. At that time, however, there was a campus-wide hiring freeze which meant there would be no assistantships available for incoming graduate students. Coincidentally, a classmate of Rebecca's told her that going to Asia to teach English was an option. Within a few weeks of graduation, Rebecca had completed an EFL teaching certificate (in the U.S.) and a half year later she began teaching English in East Asia. Altogether she spent four years there, teaching children and adults at a number of different language schools and one university. Despite her work experience and two TEFL certificates (halfway through her stay in Asia, she completed a one-month program in a Mediterranean country), Rebecca felt in need of language teacher training, the major reason for her to apply to the MA program. Like Katherine, Rebecca was also concurrently a teaching assistant in the Intensive English Program and had not previously taken any linguistics or teaching-related courses (except for the short-term TEFL certification programs). As for foreign languages, Rebecca had only basic knowledge of two foreign languages and described herself as a monolingual speaker of English.

In Table 1, I present an overview of some key biographical information about the participants. This information includes their age at the beginning of the study, region of origin, their previous education, and their previous teaching experience (English and other subjects).

Table 1.

Participant information

Name	Age	Region of origin	Previous education	Teaching experience
Maya	30	South Asia	BA/MA English Education	EFL; Content: SLA, Teaching Methods, Psycholinguistics
Katherine	25	USA	BA Communication/Spanish	EFL
Natasha	25	Eastern Europe	BA/MA Cognitive Linguistics	EFL
Rebecca	28	USA	BA English Literature	EFL

Note. Age = age at the beginning of data collection; Name = pseudonym

Context of the study

MATESOL program

The two-year MATESOL program that was the context of this study is housed in the Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages at Michigan State University. Within the same department is the PhD program in Second Language Studies. Students in the MATESOL program are given the option of a dual MA in TESOL and Linguistics to prepare them for a PhD related to Linguistics or Applied Linguistics, or, if they are jointly in the College of Education's teacher certification program, they can also obtain an ESL teaching endorsement. Some of the classes MA students enroll in are also taken by PhD students, while a few classes are designed solely for MA students (for example, the sequence consisting of a methods class and a practicum which is at the core of this study). Similarly, the faculty members teach classes in both degree programs. About ten new students are admitted to the MA program annually. In past years there had been about an even split between domestic and international students; however, during the year of data collection international (NNS) students outnumbered domestic (NS) students by two to one. Teaching opportunities in the form of ESL teaching assistantships are limited and ordinarily reserved for NSs or those with exceptionally high English-language test scores (i.e., above a 114 on the TOEFL). Individuals receiving teaching assistantships also normally have previous English-language teaching experience. Other students may, however, receive funding via research assistantships. Students who hold international scholarships have frequently entered the program over the years; in fact, as mentioned earlier, two of my focal participants were holders of such scholarships.

In this program, MA students are required to complete 36 credits and either a comprehensive exam or a thesis to obtain their degree. The classes the focal participants enrolled

35

in during their first year included classes on teaching methods, teaching practice, reading and

writing in second languages, assessment, grammar, and second language learning. Other classes

that are part of the program include basic research methods as well as varying Special Topics

classes. In Table 2 below, I list the classes that the four participants took during the year of data

collection.[1]

Program handbook and website

With regards to the curriculum, the program handbook states:

It is believed that professionals in the field of TESOL should have a combination

of theory and practical experience. The M.A.TESOL program [...] seeks to

maintain that balance by providing coursework that focuses on the link between

theory and practice. In this way, students gain understanding of the principles of

the field as they prepare to develop their careers in the field of language learning

and teaching. (MATESOL handbook, website)

According to the program website, the three main objectives of the program are giving

graduates "a strong foundation in the current theory and practice of the field of language learning

and teaching as they prepare to develop their careers," allowing them to "gain knowledge of and

experience in lesson planning and materials development," and, with reference to the teaching

practicum, "plan the curriculum for and teach an ESL course." The program handbook lists the

required and elective classes, but otherwise focuses on procedures, policies, and other details.

Students receive detailed information about course content from the course syllabi, which they

receive once they enroll in classes (or during the first class meeting). Below, I outline in detail

---

[1] In order to preserve confidentiality, the names and course numbers of these MATESOL classes were changed. Nevertheless, the names do remain representative of the content covered in these classes.

the goals and objectives of the two classes that were at the center of my study using information from the course syllabi. I also describe the classes in terms of how the instructors dealt with a mixed student population of NSs from the United States and NNSs from a variety of countries.

ESL Methods (Fall 2013)

The class on ESL methods is mandatory for all MATESOL students during their first semester. Furthermore, it represents the first in a two-class sequence, with the second being the Practicum. Although the MA program supervisor made clear that it would be preferable for students to take both of these classes in their first year, usually only about half of each incoming cohort do (Interview, Supervisor). This has led to ESL Methods being all first-year students, while the practicum is made up of about half first-year and half second-year students. Because this is a two-class sequence, ESL Methods is considered direct preparation for the practicum. As mentioned above, MA students are required to take another teaching methods class (LNG 793 Teaching Methods II) later in the program, but ESL Methods is more practice-oriented and aims for the new teachers to engage in hands-on learning. None of the focal participants took the additional methods class during their first year. The following shows the course description and goals from the syllabus for ESL Methods:

> This course is designed to give students the skills that they need to effectively team teach an independent ESL class in LNG 791, the practicum. These skills will differ for each student and will include some attention to language for students whose first language is not English. We will work on lesson plan development, particularly objective writing, task sequencing, and assessment of objectives. Students will then do teaching demonstrations in which we will focus on

37

classroom management, giving feedback, and student-teacher interaction. Much

attention will be devoted to choosing and using authentic written and spoken

materials for a variety of levels. We will address the teaching of reading and

writing as well, even though these are not skills focused on in the practicum ESL

classes. This will be a chance to put into practice many of the issues discussed in

LNG 793 [Teaching Methods II], and there will be some overlap with that course

in terms of content. The difference is that this class will take a learning-by-doing

approach. (ESL Methods, course syllabus).

The course aimed mostly to give the teachers a certain skill set (including objective

writing, lesson planning, and provision of corrective feedback) which would allow them to

successfully teach the practicum in the following semester. Aside from teaching-oriented

academic readings, the course requirements focused mostly on class observations, teaching

demonstrations, lesson plans, and the creation of lesson materials. Another emphasis included

among the course objectives was attention to language for the NNSs in the class. Frequently, the

NSs were asked to work with NNSs to help them with any language-related problems they might

have.

Practicum (Spring 2014)

For the following spring semester, the four focal participants enrolled in the practicum,

along with six, second-year MATESOL students. In the first weeks of the spring semester the

group shared ideas for lessons and activities and worked with their teaching partners on planning

and adapting lessons for their assigned class level. Many of these ideas came from their teaching

demonstrations and lesson planning assignments from ESL Methods, which they had taken either

38

the previous semester (focal participants) or a year earlier (all other students). In addition, they are given access to particularly successful lesson plans from previous years. During the first few weeks of the semester, the MA class met once a week and also dealt with some organizational issues, for example, the learner sign-up procedure. The instructor of the MA class (the program supervisor) paired up students and assigned each pair to one of the five classes, taking into account the MA students' preferences with regards to the learners' proficiency levels and who they would like as their teaching partner. They were numbered by proficiency level going from 100 (beginners) to 500 (very advanced). My focal participants were paired up together and assigned to classes with the students who had the highest proficiency, i.e., levels 400 (Maya/Rebecca) and 500 (Natasha/Katherine). In my interview with her, the supervisor asserted that NSs are usually paired with NNSs. This was the case for the focal participants; however, at the lower levels (i.e., 100-300) all of the teachers were NNSs. In the last two years, according to the MA supervisor, enrollment had tended toward more NNSs and fewer NSs. One of the reasons was a lack of funding opportunities via ESL teaching assistantships, which is usually only an option for MA students who are NSs with at least some previous English-teaching experience.

In the six weeks of teaching in the practicum, the instructing professor observed two to three classes per MA student. Aside from that and a meeting with the supervisor, the teaching pairs autonomously planned and taught their lessons. Because these classes' primary goal was conversation skills, the teachers focused on content and vocabulary rather than grammar and structure. Except for the first and last class, the teachers taught classes individually, although their teaching partner was there to help out if necessary.

At the end of the six-week teaching period, there was another final class meeting during

which the MA students shared experiences as well as particularly successful and unsuccessful classroom activities with one another. The MA students kept a reflective teaching journal throughout the semester in which they had to write down reflections on each class that they taught. This was handed in to the instructor for a grade at the end of the term, along with a reflective essay on the whole practicum experience and two sample lesson plans including comments from the teacher on where the lesson that was taught deviated from the plan..

Learner population in the practicum classes

The university allowed about 100 adult English learners to sign up for the conversational English classes for a one-time fee of $15 each. Learners came from a variety of backgrounds: international students' spouses, recent immigrants, and (particularly at the higher levels) graduate and post-doctoral students from a range of disciplines. During the spring 2014 semester, as part of the sign-up process, the lead instructor of the practicum class conducted an audio-recorded interview with each potential student to place them into the five classes, which were separated according to proficiency levels. There were about 20 students in each class at the beginning of the practicum, but due to attrition this number dropped by between 20 and 50% over the course of the practicum.

Table 2.

Classes participants enrolled in during Fall 2013 and Spring 2014

Name	Fall 2013	Spring 2014
Maya	LNG 620 - Language Learning Processes LNG 631 - Second Language Learning LNG 790 - ESL Methods	LNG 741 - Language Assessment LNG 750 - Characteristics of Language Learners & Teachers LNG 791 - Practicum
Katherine	LNG 620 - Language Learning Processes LNG 631 - Second Language Learning LNG 790 - ESL Methods	LNG 750 - Characteristics of Language Learners & Teachers LNG 777 - Grammar LNG 791 - Practicum
Natasha	LNG 620 - Language Learning Processes LNG 631 - Second Language Learning LNG 790 - ESL Methods	LNG 750 - Characteristics of Language Learners & Teachers LNG 777 - Grammar LNG 791 - Practicum
Rebecca	LNG 610 - Reading & Writing in a Second Language LNG 620 - Language Learning Processes LNG 790 - ESL Methods	LNG 750 - Characteristics of Language Learners & Teachers LNG 631 - Second Language Learning LNG 791 - Practicum

Note. Names and course numbers of classes were changed to preserve confidentiality

Role of the researcher

In a qualitative study, researchers act as a "key instrument" and explore phenomena through the lens of their own personal experiences and values (Creswell, 2013, p. 45). For this study, it could be said that I inhabited multiple researcher identities or identity positions at different times (Norton & Early, 2011), which is particularly important to note in a thesis on the subject of identity. I posit that at various times during the data collection I specifically inhabited the identities of researcher, colleague, mentor, and friend. As a NNS with the experience of being a NNEST in different contexts, my experience level was more aligned with that of the two NNSs in my study. At the same time, in my own role as a teaching assistant (though not in ESL) during the two semesters of data collection, I shared an office with the two NSs with whom I therefore interacted more frequently outside of the parameters of the study. Due to the length of the project and also the fact that I was a graduate student (and somewhat close in age), I got to know my participants very well (and they me). This personal level gave me an insider status with my participants, particularly in the latter half of the data collection when we met frequently during the practicum. I had also done a previous study with practicum teachers and this experience proved valuable for me as a researcher, but also to my participants who were able to ask me questions as they were preparing to teach the practicum classes. All four of my participants repeatedly emphasized how valuable partaking in this research study was to them. I believe this was made possible only because of some of the shared background we had, be it that I was a teacher, a fellow graduate student, or a fellow NNS. The trust between my participants and me also allowed for candid answers in situations when participants might otherwise have hesitated to say how they really felt.

While my own experiences played a role in my interpretations, I consider that knowledge

was co-constructed between the participating teachers and me. The teachers had access to all of their own interview and stimulated verbal report transcripts and were able to use them as they created their reflective teaching journals. Finally, I conducted member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by sharing my thoughts with the participants at various times during and after the data collection. Their feedback was considered in the write-up of this thesis. Nevertheless, all interpretations are my own interpretations of the data and should be seen as such.

<div align="center">Data sources</div>

In order to triangulate the data, I collected data from multiple sources throughout the year. I carried out extensive semi-structured interviews with each participant at three separate times: a few weeks into the first semester, at the beginning of the second semester, and near the end of the second semester. I also observed a majority of the class sessions of ESL Methods and at least one hour of each two-hour class each teacher taught during the Practicum. Three of each teacher's six practicum classes were video-recorded. The teachers participated in two stimulated verbal reports (first and third video) with me shortly after the recordings took place. They reflected on the second video on their own time in the form of a written journal entry. At various times throughout the year, I sent the participants individualized journal prompts. Furthermore, the teachers kept a teaching journal throughout their second semester for the teaching practicum class in which they reflected on their teaching and training. The teachers made this available to me at the end of the second semester as well. Lastly, the participants watched each other's teaching videos after the conclusion of the teaching practicum and compared their own teaching style with that of their peers. I paid each participant $200 for their participation. I describe each data sources in detail below.

Semi-structured interviews

These interviews took place at three times throughout the year: about halfway through the fall semester (Interview 1), at the beginning of spring semester prior to the beginning of the teaching practicum (Interview 2), and at the end of the spring semester, i.e., after the completion of the practicum (Interview 3). In addition, I asked additional interview questions as they arose during the two stimulated verbal report meetings. Each interview was audio-recorded and lasted between 30 and 75 minutes. I asked questions that I expected would reveal the teachers' developing identities without giving away the goal of the study. Only at the end of the final interview did I ask the participants directly to assess how their teacher identity may have changed during the course of the year and what might have caused this change. I did not discuss identity or teacher-self-development earlier so as not to alert my participants to the focus of the study. While there was a set of questions that I asked all of the participants, there were also some individualized questions for each participant depending on my observations and previous interview data. To gather information about the MATESOL program as well as the teaching practicum, I also interviewed the practicum supervisor at the end of the year. All of the interviews were transcribed prior to analysis. Sample questions from all interviews can be found in Appendix X.

Video recordings/Stimulated verbal reports

During the practicum, I video-recorded three classes per teacher. The camera was set up at the front of the class and either I or the co-teacher operated it so as to keep camera focused on the instructing teacher at all times. I used the videos as the stimuli for two stimulated-verbal report sessions with the participants as well as for a reflection the teacher wrote based on one

class (Muir, 2010, similarly used stimulated recall for reflective purposes with mathematics teachers). The verbal report sessions took place within 24 hours of the class taught with each session lasting about 60 minutes; for the completion of the written reflection the participants were given four to five days.

The respective teacher was seated in front of a computer screen to watch the video and I told them to feel free to pause, skip ahead, or go back in the recording at any time. When they wanted to comment on something they saw, I paused the video and audio-recorded their comments. Occasionally, I would ask follow-up questions to further facilitate reflection and find out more about particular events in the classroom.

Observations/Lesson plans

I observed both ESL Methods (fall semester) and the Practicum (spring semester). In ESL Methods, what I observed in the class informed my interview questions and journal prompts for the participants. My participation was limited to occasionally joining an activity when an even number of students was required. There were four students in addition to the four focal participants enrolled in the course. In the spring, during class observations, I made sure that the camera was focused on the teacher at all times. I also took notes on my laptop computer during and after class, which, once again, informed my interview questions and journal prompts. In the practicum, I did not participate in any of the classroom activities. In addition, I had access to the lesson plans for each observed lesson.

Journal entries/Reflective teaching journals

I sent the teachers journal prompts at different times during the year. These journal

entries allowed them more to time to reflect on any issue I asked them about and thus were a valuable addition to the oral interviews. With these journal prompts I addressed multiple issues; one major focus was the influence the classes in the MA program versus their previous classroom experience had on their developing ideas about (1) what they considered good teaching, and (2) their own journey as teachers. Additionally, I included prompts referring to specific occurrences in the classroom (ESL Methods), such as teaching demonstrations and the in-class critique that followed.

As the major assignment for the practicum class, aside from planning and teaching an actual class, the teachers kept a journal with their reflections on each class they taught throughout the semester. The teachers made this available to me at the conclusion of the class.

Peer video reflections

Following the participants' request and their permission, I made two of their colleagues' teaching videos (their first and third video-recorded class) available for further reflection at the end of the study. To guide their reflections, I provided prompts that asked the participants to identify strengths and weaknesses in their fellow teachers while also eliciting comments regarding similarities and differences between the observed teacher and the participant writing the reflection. Because the videos they saw were of the teachers' first class and one of the final classes, the participants were also able to observe changes in the way their colleagues taught their classes.

Table 3 summarizes the types of data and the time frames during which they were collected.

Table 3.

Schedule and types of data collected

Time frame	Data type
September – December 2013	Observations – ESL Methods
November – December 2013	Prompted journal entries
September 2013	Interview 1
February 2014	Interview 2
April 2014	Interview 3
March – April 2014	Observations & video recordings – Practicum
March 2014	Stimulated verbal report (Teaching video 1)
March 2014	Stimulated written reflection (Teaching video 2)
April 2014	Stimulated verbal report (Teaching video 3)
May 2015	Interview with supervisor
May 2015	Teaching journal
May 2015	Peer video reflections

Data analysis

During and after data collection, I analyzed all data using a constant-comparative approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Fram, 2013) in which categories and their relationships with one another were constantly re-evaluated. I investigated the teachers' developing selves in discourse (interviews, stimulated verbal reports, journal entries, teaching practicum journal) as well as in their teaching (observations, field notes) by collecting the data at different times. The emerging themes were continuously analyzed and reformulated for each participant and, during a final analysis, compared across participants and between NSs and NNSs. Thus, the data underwent a *within-case* analysis and a *between-case* analysis (Merriam, 1998) allowing me to create chronological narratives for all four participants which I could then juxtapose between individuals and also the pairs based on their NS/NNS speaker status.

Theoretical frameworks

Possible Selves theory

Markus and Nurius (1986) introduced the concept of possible selves in the field of personality psychology and, in doing so, added an important element to the predominant self-concept and self-knowledge research of the time. *Possible selves* refers to a specific type of self-knowledge, namely one that "pertains to how individuals think about their potential and about their future" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954). Pizzolato (2006) defined possible selves as "identity goals", a fitting term that highlights an individual's agency in shaping their selves or identities. From a temporal perspective this theory includes past, present, and (potential) future versions of a person's self, either in general terms (e.g., being healthy, being a good parent, etc.) or in a particular area, such as an individual's profession. While the focus is often on future

selves that one might either want to become (an ideal self) or avoid (a feared self), past selves play a vital role as well. Of course, a person will never be who they were at any point in the past, but a previous self can easily influence the creation of a potential future self. For example, "I was a great student in high school" may cause a person to aspire to also "be a great university student". From a different perspective, one might fear to create a certain self or identity, for instance, that of a "poor student" because one's parents had been unsuccessful academically. Thus, possible selves theory is closely related to individuals' motivation and potential for change as well as the interplay of who they were, are, and want to be. None of these possible selves (past, current, and future) exist in a vacuum.

Since the inception of the theory, it has been frequently applied in psychology-related subfields of many research areas (e.g., economics, sociology), but only recently has it begun to make an appearance in teacher education and language teaching-related research. Possible selves theory has the potential to contribute greatly to traditional research on teacher identity development, specifically because "[T]he addition of the 'possible' to self-concept […] provides a lens for examining *self-views that encompass a future orientation*" (Hamman, Gosselin, Romano, & Bunuan, 2010, p. 1351; highlight mine). According to some researchers in the field of teacher education, the lines between identity and the newer concept of selves "remain murky" (Rodgers & Scott, 2008, p. 733) or "unclear" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 124). I side with Hamman et al. in that the consideration of possible selves refers to a more dynamic instantiation of identity, due to the focus on development between the present and future selves while simultaneously accounting for the influence of past selves on this development. Traditional identity research has usually espoused a more rigid view of what shapes a person's identity (e.g., culture, society, gender) while focusing on one point in time (i.e., now). Under possible selves

theory, identity development is not only considered ongoing, but it is also subject to direct manipulation by the agent (e.g., the teacher). As such, "….future selves are derived from individually salient desires, hopes, reservations, and fears, but these aspirations and fears are influenced by an individual's current (and past) specific social, cultural, and environmental experiences. (Hamman et al., 2010, p. 1351)"

In the field of language teacher development, possible selves theory has thus far only received limited attention. Kubanyiova (2007, 2009) employed possible selves as a construct through which to view language teacher development. Inspired by Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self system (Dörnyei, 2005), she used the terms ideal, ought-to, and feared language teacher selves while equating these possible selves to identity goals (see Pizzolato, 2006). Kubanyiova (2009) found that discrepancies between the "actual and desired future selves" may act as "catalyst" for teacher development (p. 314).

For this thesis, I consider that a teacher's identity can accommodate multiple teacher selves. One might, for instance have or create distinct teacher selves for foreign and second language contexts or depending on the language or content one teaches. Because my focus is on the teachers' development over time, I will particularly focus on the teachers' initial selves and the changes to each teacher's initial self that took place over the course of the study (or not) and what caused those changes.

Social Identity theory

Originally formulated in the 1970s, social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) describes the role group membership plays in an individual's self-estimation. In simple terms, membership in certain groups (e.g., nationality, race, gender, age, native speaker, etc.) is

often considered desirable due to the power and status that is implicit in one's association with these groups. Likewise, individuals frequently attempt to avoid membership in less prestigious groups due to their negative perception. Individuals are understood to identify and define their 'self', at least partly, based on the social groups to which they belong. However, this self-definition is "continually in flux" and any association, even if short-lived, with an undesirable group is likely to have a "negative impact on one's level of self-esteem" (Sherman, Hamilton, & Lewis, 1999, p. 88).

With regards to the topic of this thesis, social identity theory provides a useful lens in terms of the NS/NNS divide. While the simplistic either/or use of the terms may be lamentable, "the two categories do exist in English language teaching today, and there is little question that the social category of [native English speaker] still enjoys a power and status that the category [non-native English speaker] does not" (Johnson, 2001, p. 8). Particularly noteworthy in the context of this study, Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) point out that NNS MATESOL students, while establishing an identity as ESL teachers, "must reconcile the tension of their concurrent membership in the social group of nonnative English speaking teacher, a tension exacerbated by the profession's continued adherence to native English speaker dominance" (Varghese, et al., 2005, p. 25). NNSs' confidence can suffer in many U.S. MATESOL programs as they are constantly reminded of their status when they work with NS students and faculty students (Milambiling, 2000; Saylor, 2000). Furthermore, the challenge of adapting to a new academic environment and possible issues with second language academic literacy (Braine, 2002) may add to any anxiety felt due to their speaker status.

Summary

      Both frameworks introduced here provide insightful and complementary lenses through which to view the teacher identity development of the MATESOL students who participated in the study. For one, I traced the development of the teachers' selves using possible selves theory without any restriction as to what factors had an influence on their development in the course of the study. At the same time, if and when appropriate, social identity theory was able to provide an entry point into the discussion of the impact a teacher's status as either NS or NNS had on her development. Thus I did not solely interpret every occurrence from a NS/NNS point of view, but rather followed the teachers' trajectories overall. When speaker status did come up (e.g., in an interview), I was able to use a social identity approach to add the effect of group memberships to the bigger picture.

CHAPTER 4

THE NNESTs

In this chapter and the next, I present my findings regarding the four participants' teacher development, particularly their teacher selves, in light of social identity theory (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and possible selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The former will provide insight from the perspective of group memberships (e.g., speaker status) while the latter will illuminate the participants' development in light of their past, present, and future selves which emerged from the data. I begin with the two NNESTs, Maya and Natasha, in this chapter and explore the NESTs, Katherine and Rebecca, in the following chapter. In each chapter I also compare the two participants (Maya and Natasha in chapter 4; Katherine and Rebecca in chapter 5), while in chapter 5 I additionally compare the NEST and NNEST pairs and to what degree the MATESOL experience affected their development.

Teachers are not blank slates at any stage of their development (Akbari & Dadvand, 2011). Each teacher brings a unique set of values, experiences, and skills to the table when they begin teaching, or, as in this case, go through additional training after having already taught for months or years in various contexts. Furthermore, any teacher identity is in many ways intertwined with the teacher's personal development. To create a complete picture of these individuals and the changes they went through during their first year in their MA program, I had to go beyond what came out of classroom-oriented reflections and observations. To give each participant's narrative a straightforward structure, I divided each of their narratives into the same three chronological sections: Their first semester, the teaching practicum in the second semester, and the end of the first year. In my first meeting with the participants, I identified the path that led them to the MA program. I uncovered their decisions to pursue an advanced teaching degree.

I also tried to establish who they were as teachers prior to the program because all of them had experience teaching, but their experiences differed in length of time and context. In a way, this allowed me to establish a beginning point of their teacher identity, and to see what kind of teacher they aspired to be. Then, I traced their identity development and changes to those earlier identities or selves, as they went through classes and their practicum teaching practice. For this I used reflective methods, such as interviews and journal entries, but also my own observations from my frequent class visits and the videos I recorded of their lessons. Finally, in collaboration with the participants, I took stock of their development as teachers in general and their teacher identities in particular, at the end of the first year in the program. At that time, the participants openly discussed with me how the MA classes had been helpful (or not), and also what changes could be implemented to aid their development as teachers beyond their first year in the MA program.

Maya

Part 1 – Fall semester (pre-practicum)

In the case of NNESTs, I decided that I needed to find out about their motives for joining the program. This is because they took an additional step (one the NESTs did not need to take). They moved to another country to learn more about teaching, which goes well beyond what most people do for a mere 'job'. Thus, a logical starting point in the discussion of both NNEST participants' trajectories was how they became interested in teaching a foreign language, but also what role English in particular played for them. How did it become so important that they would both eventually leave their home countries to pursue an English teaching degree abroad?

Maya's case was somewhat unique among the study's participants because her choices

were limited. Indeed, her 'picking' English language education was really the only choice for her in her home country that would allow her to advance her career after she had, following local custom, started a family at a very young age. When she and I talked about the importance of English for her and its role in the context in which she grew up, she described the language as "a ghost" (i.e., always there in the background) and called high English proficiency "unattainable" in her home country (Maya, Interview 1). Its importance for economic and personal development was a recurring theme in my discussions with Maya. In recounting her history with English, Maya referred to an anecdote that would have a crucial impact on her desire to learn and teach the language and thus shape her personal and professional future. As the first female to achieve the highest distinction in high school in English in her school district, Maya was written about in newspapers and interviewed for scholarships. One encounter with an American woman who was working in the Peace corps left a great impression on Maya and, in fact, triggered her decision to eventually devote her professional life to English language education (italicized highlights mine):

> Excerpt 1: [N]ow people started coming, people came to me to interview me, because they wanted to offer me scholarship to further my study. I was just fifteen years old then. I remember one of the American ladies who was working in her home country. She came to interview me. *I understood what she said, but I could not respond in English*. She came to visit me with one translator and that translator was translating in English what I was saying to her, but I could understand that he was not translating exactly what I was saying. *I knew that, I realized that, but I couldn't do anything. That moment made me realize that now I should learn English. I should not only learn English as a language, but I should*

major in English ... (and) go for English language learning and teaching.
(Interview 1)

One of Maya's character traits that I was able to detect from her conduct in classes and that also came out in interviews was that challenges motivated her. As shown in Excerpt 1, the fact that she could not make herself understood in English and was helpless when the translator did not convey exactly what she meant to say played a role in her choosing to become an English teacher. Years later, when she had already obtained undergraduate and graduate degrees in English language education and had become faculty at the same university, her department allowed her to choose what class she wanted to teach. Maya picked the class she herself had found the most difficult as a student, a perfect example for her willingness to leave her comfort zone in order to further her knowledge and skills. It also allows a first glimpse at her initial beliefs about teaching prior to coming to the United States.

> Excerpt 2: The interesting thing is when during my [previous] Master's, I studied phonetics, phonology, grammar, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistics, but *among all those subjects psycholinguistics was the most difficult subject for me.* […] When I graduated from the same university, and again I was among the best students, […], I was asked if I wanted to teach in the same department. My happiness knew no bound at that time. I accepted the proposal, but they asked me what I wanted to teach now. *I selected psycholinguistics, because that was the most difficult subject when I was a student.* Now I wanted to teach that subject, *because I thought you could have mastery over something only when you start teaching it.* (Interview 1)

For Maya these examples provide a glimpse of her initial self early in her first year in the program. She was also not only supremely motivated and driven to *master* whatever was before her, but also independently reflective about her previous and developing knowledge about teaching. By way of example, when I asked her during Interview 2 (Spring semester) after the completion of ESL Methods to reflect on the three classes that she had taken during her first semester the previous fall, she had already done so. She had spent a day per class reflecting in written form simply for her own benefit. Maya also frequently talked about the expectations of her employers at the university in her home country. These expectations seemed to be her own as well. Having been given this incredible opportunity to study in the United States, she saw it as her job, perhaps even duty, to absorb all the knowledge she could to eventually bring it back to the university in her home country.

As one would expect, coming to the United States presented quite a challenge for Maya at the beginning. This was the first time she left her home country, and in doing so she furthermore had to leave her two children in the care of her mother. Maya slowly opened up about how difficult this had been for her. By the second semester, she had found a way to deal with the situation by limiting her time using social media and adhering to a strict schedule each day. During her first semester, however, she had not been able to be her usual organized self. Part of the reason was her familiarity with much of the course material.

Excerpt 3: I'm not saying about myself, but I was one of the most organized members in my family, but *when I came here I didn't have much work*. Just reading and reading and most of [the readings] were already in the familiar areas. *What happened was just me missing the kids and then crying, sometimes I used to*

57

go to the bank of the river and then cry loudly so that no one would hear me. For

some months [...] my earlier organized way was dispelled. My habit was spoiled.

Now I have again gone back to my previous habit. (Interview 2)

It has to be stressed that Maya entered the program with a well-established vision of herself as a teacher and a person. She repeatedly referred to the identity she had back home and a major realization she had had after a few months on her own far from home that she can be *somebody new* in the United States. The following statement perfectly encapsulates Maya realizing a new present 'self' that separated her from her previous 'self'.

Excerpt 4: When I started [the fall semester], *I thought that school was everything for me* but slowly, as I told you in these 30 years I have not recognized who I was and I came to know that I'm a complete form. *My identity back home was [that] I'm not a human being. I'm someone's daughter, someone's wife, someone's mother and I'm nothing but now I realize that I'm something beautiful.* I'm somebody's somebody. School is just one aspect of my life. [...] *My culture, integrating, trying to integrate in the new culture without losing my original one is another part of my life.* [...] *I think school is not everything.* (Interview 2)

In her previous life, Maya had played numerous roles and all of them for somebody else (someone's wife, daughter, mother). The move to the United States afforded her the space to re-evaluate her own identity; she was able to see her own value, independent from her other roles for the first time. This new freedom would also have a profound impact on her teacher identity during the course of her first year and particularly during the teaching practicum in the spring.

58

Unsurprisingly, Maya went through a period of *culture shock* (Pedersen, 1995) when she moved to the United States. This began as early as the orientation provided by her scholarship program where sensitive topics, such as sexual harassment, were discussed. These were discussions she would never encounter, let alone partake in, in her home country. Maya pointed out that it took her a while to become comfortable around her colleagues in the TESOL program and, particularly during the first semester, this made her feel left out frequently.

> Excerpt 5: [...] *cultural shock was let's say the most stressful part for me in the first semester.* [...] For example, talking about physical contacts and sexual relations is not allowed at all in my country. That means we never take part in such conversations because *we grow up in such environment in which talking about such things is regarded to be a sin.* You never meet a boy before marriage and after marriage you dedicate your whole life to your husband and you never talk about these things. When I came here, when I attended the, let's say gatherings, with my friends and then every time they talk about these things, *I feel like I'm, let's say, excluded from that discourse because I have nothing to say on those topics.* (Interview 2)

Apart from the fact that adapting to life in a foreign country provided some expected challenges, there was also a very different university culture she had to contend with. In many ways this cultural change, however, was beneficial and even exciting to Maya. It is easy to take for granted the kind of amenities higher education affords students and faculty in the United States. Up until she started her MATESOL, access to material was not easy to come by for Maya. She talked about how in her home country professors from different universities would

share photocopies of articles and books that they had obtained after one of them had gone abroad. Much of the material was outdated, so coming to a U.S. university was like a dream come true to Maya.

> Excerpt 6: I would rank the library in my top position here because this type of library and this type of system, this type of, let's say, *access to anything that you want to read this was beyond my imagination*. I had heard about the library system because [in her home country] we have libraries of 1960s and 70s and 80s and some of the books that we get are from our professor, that's all. (Interview 2)

Similarly, the treatment by the professors was unlike what she was used to from her previous university. Particularly, she was struck by how personable faculty members were in the MATESOL program. In her home country class sizes were enormous and student questions were actively discouraged. In spite of the obviously much smaller graduate classes, Maya was hesitant to ask many questions although she also wanted to be the kind of teacher that allowed questions. In her home country she had been reprimanded for going against the institutional culture by frequently allowing and even encouraging student questions. During Interview 2, she described how she actually felt the need to check with one instructor whether asking questions was acceptable. Having been assured that it was, this made her vow to be that kind of personable teacher in the future, even in her home country where the university culture remained opposed to it.

> Excerpt 7: I talked to [professor's name] once outside of the classroom, "When I ask questions, do I … Is it something like bothering or do you get irritated?" because *the professors back home never allow us to ask questions and here you*

can ask any type of questions. [Here] they answer your questions. You write

emails to them regarding let's say your academic or non-academic things and then

they just reply in five minutes or maximum 30 minutes. (Interview 2)

As stated before, no teacher begins an MATESOL with a blank slate and Maya in

particular came into the program with a wealth of life experience as well as an impressive

teaching background, albeit in a decidedly different context and culture. The question was how

her experience would serve her (1) in class with other teachers, including the first NSs she had

ever been in a class with, and (2) when she taught her first true ESL class in the United States.

Fortunately, the worst of the culture shock had worn off by the second semester and her classes

were more challenging than in the first semester. Under these circumstances, and above all

because she could put her knowledge and skills to use in a classroom, her teaching self was

slowly transformed over the course of the year.

In spite of immense academic success in her home country, and the fact that she already

had a Master's degree and had been awarded a prestigious international scholarship, Maya was

insecure when she first entered a U.S. classroom as a graduate student. This would be the first

time that the theoretical knowledge about teaching she had acquired would be put to the test.

More importantly, she would be classmates with NSs, a group she had neither known as

classmates nor as teachers. Judging from my own observations in her first semester (during the

preparation class, ESL Methods), she was more than capable of holding her own. In fact, it was

easy to tell that she had previously acquired a lot of theoretical knowledge about key constructs

from the fields of Linguistics and SLA before starting the program. Nevertheless, she reported

feeling less than confident for the first few weeks of the term. This feeling, however, was

assuaged by the very supportive class instructor who helped her build confidence in herself.

> Excerpt 8: Actually when I entered the class in the beginning and *I saw all my native speaker friends and all the friends who have a good educational background, I thought like I would be lost somewhere in the ocean* but every time the way *[professor's name] encouraged*, even if we make mistakes and then the way she said that, "Okay you can do it. Oh you know this, oh you are very good." This made me feel that I could do something. *The most important thing that I learned in that class is that I could do some things. I could be a good teacher.* (Interview 2)

As she wrote in her first journal entry, ESL Methods was indispensable in preparing her for the teaching practicum, precisely because it raised her confidence and she realized she was not worse than the other *smart* students. At the same time, Maya continued to be concerned with her non-native-like pronunciation. In her first journal entry she stated: "Since English is my third language and we were never exposed to the input from native speakers of English, I am always worried about improving my pronunciation." (Journal 1) This was an ever-present issue which carried increased significance because, as she said during the pre-practicum interview: "I came to realize that the first thing which I still feel is I need to improve my pronunciation a lot because *that's what some of the people of my country expect* when you go to the native speaking environment to learn" (Interview 2). For Maya, her development was closely connected to her eventual return home where she would resume her post as a university professor in English language education. Therefore, her teacher identity development was not only her own business but it was directly linked to the values and attitudes placed upon her by her native culture as well

as the culture of the particular institution she will return to. Maya was not just in the United States attempting to further her own education, but she saw herself very much as a representative of (and indebted to) her home country. From experience she knew that resources in the education system in her country were limited, and that improving this education system depended on scholars like her to bring back knowledge and materials taken for granted in most Western nations. In addition, her being a female served as extra motivation. She repeatedly mentioned that she wanted to succeed "for all the females in her home country" (e.g., Interview 1).

Prior to teaching in the practicum, I asked Maya what aspect of it might be the most challenging. Her prompt answer was that after many years of teaching *homogeneous* classrooms she would face a truly *heterogeneous* classroom for the first time. Even though classrooms in her home country were filled with speakers of different dialects (and even languages) from all over the region, she still found that those classes had a certain unity to them. She shared a background with these students and had once been just like them. Her practicum class, on the other hand, started out with 20 students from about ten different countries. Moreover, these students were quite advanced (level 4 out of 5), came from various professional backgrounds, and ranged in age from about 20 to 70.

To better understand the enormous shift in classroom culture with which Maya was faced, it is necessary to more closely describe what her typical classes in her home country were like. This was understandably a recurrent topic during our conversations and interviews. In the following excerpt, Maya talked about the student population as well as class sizes and how she and other teachers in her home country dealt with it.

> Excerpt 9: *Thirty-five students is the smallest one. The biggest one is 220.* [...] It's
>
> […] the oldest university of our country with more than 600 affiliated colleges

throughout the country. Though there are some new other universities now, but since that is the cheapest one and is accessible for all middle class and lower class people so most of the students get admitted there. *Among them many of them then major in English, because now the people have realized that they cannot take advantage of this technological development that is developing throughout the world without learning English. So it's English, 220 students. Adopting some communicative activities is just next to impossible. You just climb on the dais -* there are daises - and then [use the] microphone [and] you just start lecturing. Even if you project something through multimedia projector the back students cannot see, just some students only. Therefore the best way that the teachers adopt that I have been adopting for the last six years is*, you go and then use the board, you write with big letters and then shout as loudly as you can*.

(Interview 1)

Even Master's level classes, which she had both attended and taught in her home country, had similar class sizes. Maya often explicitly talked about having to switch from the *jug and mug* educational style (where the teacher's sole purpose is to provide knowledge to the students) to being a facilitator of real interaction in the classroom. She was aware that the idea of the instructor being the provider of knowledge was deeply ingrained from a lifetime of classroom experience. At the same time, Maya was excited to really interact with her students. She knew all about the theory behind the communicative approach to language teaching (CLT; e.g., Savignon, 2000), but had never been able to actually use it. Again, the driving force behind her anticipated changes was not only her own motivation but also the expectations of change back in her home

64

country. In this case, more than her home institution, it was her former students who were looking forward to something new upon her eventual return.

> Excerpt 10: *We're still following jug and mug theory where just the teacher prepares all the notes and then just uses the lecture method, the students recite them, memorize them and then [the students] [...] write and pass examinations so we cannot assess their achievement in reality.* My students were happy with me. *They told me that they would be waiting for me to bring some changes.* (Interview 1)

Part 2 - The practicum semester

Maya's teaching style, which she cultivated over years in her home country, stood out to me when I compared it to the other teachers in this study as well to practicum teachers I had worked with in the past. Already in the first class, which she co-taught with Rebecca, her experience utilizing the blackboard as much as possible became apparent. Even as Rebecca was leading the class in a simple get-to know-your-classmates type of activity, Maya was taking note of grammatical and lexical errors on the board and assigning them to certain places on the board for later reference. Bringing focus to form was an important part of her teaching large classes in the manner described above. In the absence of teacher-student interaction and the technology most teachers in the West are accustomed to, the blackboard was Maya's greatest ally in class.

I video-recorded the first class Maya taught independently for our first stimulated verbal report meeting. In that class she had also used the blackboard not just very frequently, but also more strategically than I was used to seeing from English teachers. She used different sections for the provision of corrective feedback and to teach words, parts of speech, and grammatical

functions. During the stimulated verbal report, the first time she ever saw herself teach, she became aware of and quickly pointed out that she used the board a lot. She was, however, unsure about whether this feature of her teaching was good or bad.

> Excerpt 11: *[It's] something I do. It's not necessarily that it's good*, but [...] if someone asked me a question I just wrote it because everyone could contribute from their sides. If I had to show the relationship between or among words I wrote them down. *Maybe it's because I have the habit of writing everything on the board. This is not something that I just did yesterday. Sometimes I may need to reduce my time of writing on the board*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

In this first class, Maya seemed like a teacher transported from a very different teaching culture to the U.S. classroom. With some help from her teaching partner, Rebecca, she had created a PowerPoint presentation, but was not yet fully sure how to utilize it. Maya's strengths clearly lay in her experience and abundant, if theoretical, knowledge about English teaching. After her years of instructing large numbers of mostly anonymous masses of student, it appeared that she enjoyed the opportunity to not just transmit knowledge but closely interact with her students as well. While Maya agreed that she enjoyed this kind of communicative teaching tremendously, she repeatedly referred to having to leave her "comfort zone" while she was watching the video of herself teaching one of her first practicum session. For example, because students in the class had a generally high proficiency, they were very interested in idiomatic expressions which are often closely related to American culture. Maya, as a very recent transplant to the United States was not entirely comfortable in such situations, unlike when she covered regular vocabulary or grammatical issues.

66

Excerpt 12: [The] other thing is, *I'm still in the process of learning beyond language*, because what I do have so far is just language structures, words, that stuff. For example, *when a student raises a question about some expressions, especially idioms, idiomatic expressions we're going beyond language and giving them some cultural aspects. I have to learn that myself.* (….) [T]hey may [say], '*Have you watched this movie? Have you heard this song? Have you watched this TV program?*' […] For me, *I have to go beyond my comfort zone*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

In addition, this was also her very first ESL, as opposed to EFL, class. While she had been looking forward to it, she described the sheer variety of students as one of the most challenging aspects. Not only were people from different countries, but they varied to a large degree in their age and motivations for attending the class. Maya went so far as to say that it was easier to teach a homogenous class of 100 students in her home country. In the following excerpt she made reference to a number of student types that she was confronted with in her first class and whose divergent personalities represented a new challenge.

Excerpt 13: Though I had more than 100 students I used to remember many of those names. Remembering names was easy but this is just too much -- *we can never have an idealized homogeneous class but this is too heterogeneous for me*! In terms of their age … for example, this lady [points to the screen] has two kids, one was very small, and she was always like, "I got a message that she's crying and my husband is not able to feed her; I am worried." So, one is thinking about her child and another was thinking about his identity crisis from India where he

67

was a very good business man or something like that. Someone is political; she [points to the screen] used to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some of them are very fresh undergraduate students who don't care at all about anything; they just want to learn something. *So this variability of the students is the most challenging thing*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

By the end of this verbal report session, Maya admitted that "it's difficult to rewire your system" after spending her whole life in a certain cultural teaching context. Nevertheless she wanted to leave her comfort zone over the following weeks to become the sort of teacher she needed to be to succeed under these very different circumstances. Maya, however, kept her expectations low, knowing that six weeks of teaching would not allow her to fully be able to implement the communicative teaching style and approach she was focusing on in her MA program. As she put it: "[E]ven if I may not be able to be a good teacher that I want to be within these six weeks, but this will be the beginning step."

It was interesting for me to watch Maya's classroom behavior transform over the course of the practicum. She was explicit about the changes she wanted to achieve in her interviews, and these changes became unmistakably visible when I observed her classes. Without my asking her to, she reflected on each lesson immediately after teaching it. Additionally, watching the videos of her classes gave her an even better understanding of the current state of her teaching behavior; this aided her in making adjustments and moving her toward the teaching self she wished to create and portray to her students.

Like all the participants, Maya watched the second video by herself and wrote down her thoughts and observations in a written reflection. Maya explicitly wrote about something I was

observing in her teaching, namely her moving away from the form-focused way of teaching that she had exhibited in the first couple of classes. As I had noted earlier, in her first classes, Maya had been fairly indiscriminate and she appeared to write down almost every grammatical mistake she observed students make. Now, however, she became much more deliberate in the way she dealt with student errors. In her reflection she wrote: "I picked up students' errors and wrote them on the board to deal with. However, I did not pick up all the errors in forms that I had done in my last lesson. I only chose those errors which were related to the topic and which could affect intelligibility." (Stimulated Verbal Report 2) She again noted the necessity of her leaving her "academic/formal comfort zone." The students in the practicum wanted to learn about American culture, and Maya was still very inexperienced in that area herself. Moreover, her teaching experience in her home country was of little help because there the focus had been purely on the language and never on culture in English-speaking countries.

Maya concluded her written reflection of the second video-recorded lesson with what she deemed "the most important thing" she took away from seeing herself teach this time, the "pronunciation aspect." She had mispronounced a key word in the class multiple times and it reminded her that an improved pronunciation was expected by her supervisors back in her home country. Thus, she resolved to pay particular attention to this facet of her teaching. However, one could easily argue that Maya improving her pronunciation would depend more on her life outside of the classroom than on her teaching.

Over the following weeks, Maya continued to work on her new teaching self. I continued to observe her classes and she and I met again to watch a video-recording of the last class she taught by herself. One noticeable new feature of Maya's teaching was that she had begun to routinely incorporate reviewing and previewing techniques in her lessons. This was something

that her teaching partner, Rebecca, did at the beginning and end of each class. While Maya had always used previewing and reviewing techniques when teaching form-focused classes in her home country, she had initially forgotten about this strategy. Seeing Rebecca use it in her class session made Maya realize their importance for this content-based teaching context as well.

The final stimulated verbal report gave me the opportunity to discuss with Maya the changes in her teaching that I had observed over the course of the practicum. Again, Maya was aware of and had consciously altered her provision of focus on form, particularly with concurrent use of the blackboard. When she started teaching the class, Maya thought she could help the students with "everything they had problems with." Over the course of the practicum, she had discovered the need to have criteria for when to bring focus to language form and when to keep the focus on meaning rather than "painting the whole black board writing everything that I come across". During the verbal report, Maya stopped the video multiple times and talked about how she had altered her style between the earlier and later classes in the practicum. Excerpt 14 exemplifies one of those instances.

> Excerpt 14: "I just picked up those words related to the video we were going to watch and the words related to the topic of discussion, *not everything as I did in my first lesson.* […] What I did [in my first lesson] was, any type of incidental words or the grammatical structures or some of those collocation of words, anything that I found incorrect, I just picked it up and then wrote on the board and *spent much of my time on discussing them*, but *now I learned to be selective among those incidentally occurring grammatical and vocabulary [items]*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

As this practicum was the first time that Maya had a *manageable* class size (less than 30 students), she became comfortable using peer-to-peer interaction activities. She also developed confidence incorporating the different ideas students came up with and linking them together. In her previous teaching in her home country, there was very little opportunity for any student participation, and there was certainly no way to incorporate multiple student comments into the lesson. In this lesson, the overall topic was happiness. Maya paused the video during our meeting to point out how she had begun to connect student responses.

> Excerpt 15: *[W]hat I had not done before is to link between or among the responses given by the students, which I think is important to attract their attention and to make the students relate to each other.* When one said that happiness means some achievement, another one talked about happiness in terms of internal feelings. (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

Maya consciously changed the way she provided corrective feedback in this setting. In the classrooms with large numbers of students that she faced in her home country any correction that was supposed to be noticed by many of students had to be clear and direct. Thus, on the one hand, favoring explicit feedback in large classrooms (and sometimes lecture halls) seemed intuitively appropriate. On the other hand, Maya also alluded to the role institutional pressure played in her choosing that particular feedback type in her home country. In the smaller practicum classes, by contrast, Maya was able to choose what feedback type would be most appropriate, and she preferred to correct more implicitly to protect the students from embarrassment they might feel when being corrected in front of the classmates.

> Excerpt 16: "I believe in giving corrective feedback so one very important thing

71

that I've changed now is *I was used to giving explicit feedback, because that's what we're supposed to do in her home country*, because implicit feedback is not, there are a lot of students *and if you give implicit feedback they do not even notice that they had made a mistake and their mistake had been corrected*. We're asked or we're advised to give explicit feedback so that the students know that they have made a mistake and their mistake has been corrected. *Here I prefer to give implicit feedback, because there are few students and I don't want them to feel embarrassed by giving explicit feedback.*" (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

While Maya showed conscious development (or at least, change) in some of her teaching, there were parts of her previous teacher identity she held on to. As it turned out, she did this just as deliberately. From her first class on, I had observed a certain mannerism that I had never observed from other ESL teachers. Maya thanked each participating student and addressed them formally right after they had made their contribution to the class. This formal yet friendly tradition had been instilled in Maya in her time as a student in her home country. It was a feature of her teacher identity she valued and consciously preserved. She commented on it while watching the final video. Similarly to her choice of using implicit feedback, it highlights the concern she has for her students' comfort in the classroom.

Excerpt 17: Yeah, I [thank my students], because, I don't know*, this may be my belief as a teacher [which] developed from my own experience as a student. When I was a student and I used to respond and when my answer was acknowledged, I felt encouraged to prepare more and then I felt good*. Maybe this belief is not just constructed in class; maybe the source of this one is from my own being a student.

72

(Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

After we had finished watching the video, Maya told me that her beliefs about what made a good language teacher had profoundly changed. Initially, Maya's sole examples of seemingly successful teachers were the ones she had encountered in her home country. She described those teachers as infallible, all-knowing beings who had answers for everything. In her own MA classes, however, she had been surprised by the "humanity" of some of the "big professors" whose work she had read and studied in her home country and who were now her instructors. As this excerpt demonstrates, the importance of her peers in creating knowledge or solving problems in the classroom was also new to her and had quickly become a cornerstone of what she valued in teaching.

> Excerpt 18: *I changed my mind* regarding what a teacher should be like or is supposed to be doing with the students. *In my country* the English language teachers, not only the English language teachers, *every teacher is supposed to answer any type of question* […]. *They can't say they don't know* or they can't say they don't have good answer for their students' questions. They can't say they will look for the answer tomorrow or the next day, because they're supposed to answer on the spot. […] but when I came here and when I saw *even the big professors saying, 'I don't have a good answer for you',* I just changed my mind that *even a teacher is a human being* […]. I have realized, as a student in the first semester, that *most of the time our questions are answered by our fellow colleagues in the classroom before the professor answers them. This is a great change in my belief or perception towards what a teacher should be like*. (Stimulated Verbal Report

3)

Part 3 – The end of year one

A few weeks later, Maya and I met for her final interview. By then, she had used the time to reflect on the changes that had taken place over the year and finished all of her classwork. Many of my questions were aimed at uncovering the changes in Maya's teaching and teacher identity over the course of her first year in the program and what had caused them. Similar to earlier meetings with Maya, she came to the interview more than well prepared having contemplated her learning experience and what it meant for her as a teacher now and in the future. Interestingly, Maya was honest about the fact that she had not acquired much new knowledge in her classes, but that it was the experience of successfully teaching ESL after years of teaching EFL and university-level content classes that had increased her confidence. She separated this confidence that she can function as an English teacher in this new context from any overall increase of confidence in her skills, saying "Now I know it's not just English as a foreign language in her home country only; now I could try teaching ESL in a real sense." (Interview 3)

Maya had entered the program with an abundance of theoretical knowledge about teaching, linguistics, and Second Language Acquisition. In fact, in one of the interviews, she confided that there were times in her classes when she pretended that she did not know the answer during a class discussion when in reality she did not just know the answer but what page of the textbook it was on (she had used the same textbook as a student and instructor in her home country). While Maya would not say this, I would speculate that she did not want to monopolize the classroom interaction and take opportunities to participate away from other students. In the

74

time I have known her, Maya always tended to deflect any individual praise and help other when the chance presented itself. In spite of her remarkable knowledge prior to her enrolment in the program, Maya developed greatly; however, for her most changes came primarily from the opportunity to turn theoretical knowledge into practice. A prime example was how, for the first time, she could actually employ implicit types of corrective feedback and was able to break from one-sided teacher-dominated types of communication. The two-class sequence of *ESL classroom practice* and the *Practicum* gave her a chance to try new techniques out. In the following excerpt, she used the term *taskmaster* to describe what kind of teacher she was in her home country.

> Excerpt 19: For example*, I've been teaching my students about recasting the student's errors and then giving them implicit feedback but which we never did because there are no interactions in class at all*. It's always the teacher who initiates, students' role is just to respond and then teacher gives feedback and that feedback is never incorporated by the students in their subsequent production, because *there is always one way delivery from the teachers, because teacher is all in all should be a taskmaster, should know everything that the students need*. (Interview 3)

The practicum was immensely useful for Maya to free herself from the teaching culture in which she had been educated her entire life. While it had been challenging, she was ecstatic about the opportunity to finally teach learners from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In her home country, she pointed out that she "knew their every background, cultural, social, religious, et cetera, but teaching English to speakers of other languages, this is the first time I really could get a chance to put it into practice." While the more theory-oriented MA classes

(e.g., Language Learning Processes; Second Language Learning) were light on new knowledge for Maya, the way in which they were conducted still forced Maya out of her *comfort zone* (a phrase she used with great frequency).

> Excerpt 20: *My comfort zone was to talk about academic things only and content matter only and giving explicit knowledge, sharing everything that I know*.[…] I was brought up in that academic culture, but now I learnt that it's not the teacher who knows it all, so the teacher has to make the students do something on their own […] *[In her home country] I just received when I was a student and I had to give when I was a teacher so it was just like one way*, but *[here] I learned to make it interactive in practice, which I had studied in theory only*. (Interview 3)

Far from making a simplistic good versus bad distinction between teaching cultures in her home country and the United States, Maya found value in both systems. She described the importance placed on teachers in her home country with a touch of nostalgia. For example, Teachers' Day is an annual holiday in her home country during which students seek out current and former teachers and give them food and flowers in return for the teacher's blessings. Against this backdrop, she talked about the feeling of power and authority she experienced teaching large groups of students in her home country and also how grateful she felt toward her own past teachers. Her experiences in her first year in the United States had added something to her teacher identity in that now she was more than an authoritative teaching figure; she could also be a teacher as friend and helper. Excerpt 21 demonstrates how much Maya valued the teaching culture that shaped her as a teacher, and what her MATESOL experience in the United States added to her teacher identity.

76

Excerpt 21*: My identity as a teacher [in] one aspect is still the same: I would like to be called a teacher.* The word teacher gives me some feeling. (Dominik: What kind of feeling?) *A feeling of power and authority.* Sometimes just wearing a formal dress in your country, you're supposed to wear your national dress when you teach, and when you climb on a stage and address 150 students together. *When they call you 'teacher' and then when they just celebrate Teachers Day.* When I celebrate my Teachers Day that's the day when I feel or approach all of my teachers who I respect a lot to express my gratitude for making me what I am today. […] Regarding the economics, [teaching] is one of the least paid jobs, but there is one day in a year where *students worship their teachers*, *because teacher is taken as a form of God. My identity, now I no longer have that feeling of authority in the sense that I had before. I learned that I could be teacher not in the form of authority only, but as a friend, as a helper.* (Interview 3)

As we discussed the impact of her teacher training here in the United States, I also asked Maya about the teacher training she had received in her home country. While the theories covered in teaching methods courses were similar, in practice there were some profound differences. Being a teacher in her home country has always meant to have less access to technology that is taken for granted in Western teaching contexts. ("We do not have multimedia projector and all these PowerPoint slides, all these things.") Maya contended that upon her return her previous teaching context the blackboard will have to play a more significant role in her teaching again, but that in this context (i.e., ESL) she had used it less and relied on PowerPoint more. Teachers in her home country do learn about how to use modern technology in

77

classrooms, but in reality few classrooms come equipped with many of the types of technology taken for granted in the United States. I was surprised to hear that as part of English teaching methods classes in her home country future English teachers learn how to create teaching supplies out of locally available material. This made for a stark contrast to classes at a U.S. institution where it was assumed that photocopies, videos, and PowerPoint slides would be part of teaching. In Excerpt 22, Maya summarizes the content of such a teaching methods class, which includes creating flannel boards and pocket charts to be used for class activities.

Excerpt 22: *The second half of the course is related to material design,* that is, ELT material development, which talks about *how to use your blackboard or how to use your overhead projectors or PowerPoint slides*, which teachers do not normally use PowerPoints because of the lack of accessibility. *They teach us how to prepare pocket charts from cloths and cardboards. They teach us how to use flannel boards. Each of us has to prepare flannel boards and pocket charts. We had to sew it with our hands…* (Dominik: What are those?) […]*It's because we have to make use of locally available materials, which are very easily accessible to all the teachers throughout the country.*[…] They may not even have cloths to prepare pocket charts and they make use of something that is going to be recycled, the boards, and we used to cut them into circular shape and then we use them to teach vocabulary items into play. We don't have the ready-made language games and activities […]. (Interview 3)

Maya was constantly reflecting about her personal and professional life and so it came as no surprise that she had an answer ready for my final and direct question about her teacher

78

identity development. Particularly, she had thought about her career and how this experience would shape her future once she did return to her old teaching context. It was easy to discern that she wanted to be more than just a teacher and that one of her main objectives would be to help spread the knowledge to even remote areas of her home country. She mentioned three "facets" of her identity, namely teacher, researcher, and teacher trainer, pointing out that she did not "want to confine myself as a teacher person only." A major challenge she foresaw was that in the most remote places in her home country there might not be enough (or any) textbooks to use in the training of future teachers. For those cases, it would be of the utmost importance that she be able to make the knowledge she had acquired meaningful in a completely different context.

> Excerpt 23: When I design my training materials to deal with them [teachers in rural areas] *all the theoretical things I've learned*, all the theory that I teach my other students in the university do not work at all so *I have to convert [them] myself. I have to put myself into their shoes to see in which context they're working.* (Interview 3)

This discrepancy between the teaching contexts was on her mind constantly throughout the first year and it was a source of one of Maya's few frustrations. She treasured the education she received in the MA program as well as the ESL teaching experience she gained from the practicum, but she was left to wonder how this could help her improve the teaching in contexts as dissimilar as what she would face in her home country. With large class sizes and limited access to technology many of the theories about teaching espoused in this (and most) MATESOL programs became unrealistic and useless. As Excerpt 23 demonstrates, Maya concluded that it would have to be her job to adapt the teaching skills and theories for other contexts. However,

she was honestly not sure how she could do that at the end of this first year and none of the classes covered how to use favorable teaching methods, such as CLT, in places with a less-than-ideal student-teacher ratio.

Nevertheless, Maya drew an optimistic conclusion about what she had learned about teaching and about herself. As she thought about how her philosophy of teaching had changed over the year, she declared that much of it remained the same, but had been enriched in some aspects. She stressed the need for true passion toward both the students and the profession of teaching while also emphasizing a need to step out of that comfort zone to have a chance to develop and improve one's teacher-self.

> Excerpt 24: My teaching philosophy that has remained the same is, again I would like to repeat the same that *you need to love your profession, you're not doing it just playing your role. You're not only adding something in your identity, but you're just constructing your students' [identities] as well* along with yours so you should always respect and love your profession. What has changed, again, is the same. *You should be ready to embrace the new things*, which sometimes may not be in your comfort zone so embracing the new things and *then accommodating that in your teaching could make you [a better teacher]*. (Interview 3)

Next, I will turn to the second NNS participant in the study. Natasha came to the program with a very different set of experiences and expectations, which added another piece to the complex puzzle that is the development of NNS teachers in the context of a U.S. MATESOL program.

Natasha

Part 1 – Fall semester (pre-practicum)

Natasha's teaching journey began with a female high school English teacher who Natasha adored and who "created a different life in class" (Interview 1). In my first meeting with her, Natasha enthused about this teacher and the immersion-type class that she, unlike other teachers at her high school, created day in and day out. This class also stood in contrast to Natasha's experiences with other language classes she had taken. In addition to English, Natasha had studied German for a considerable amount of time during her primary education and, later, she took Spanish classes in university. Neither of those language-learning experiences, however, had the same effect on her that the English classes did. With German, for example, her teachers constantly changed, in contrast to the consistency she enjoyed with her English instructor who, furthermore, created a uniquely comfortable class atmosphere that was, as described by Natasha, as close to living abroad as one could imagine. Natasha expressed her "love for English" (Interview 1) many times during the study. It was that passion that directed her toward English teaching at an early age. This happened despite Natasha's certainty that she would never actually teach herself.

> Excerpt 25: *I was blessed to have the best teacher in the world, and she just basically made me love English.* When I was finishing school and I was thinking, 'What do I want to do with my life?' English, I love English; okay, let's do that. *I never wanted to teach, never ever, though I started teaching in my last year of high school.* When I went to do my undergrad I already had students, and I've been working and tutoring for eight years now. *I learned German in school but it didn't really work well. In five years that I learned it we had twelve or fifteen*

81

teachers, whereas in English I had only one throughout all those years. (Interview

1)

In addition to her early tutoring experience, Natasha also taught English university-classes with about 10 to 15 students while she successively completed Bachelor's (English Language and Literature) and Master's degrees (English Philology). Natasha even began a PhD in Cognitive Linguistics before coming to the United States on a scholarship. Her initial desire had been to pursue a PhD in the United States, but her mentor advised against it. This mentor had the opinion that Natasha neither had the knowledge nor the credentials to be admitted to a U.S. PhD program. However, the advisor also thought that Natasha did a good job teaching, so that aiming for a TESOL Master's program was her best chance. Natasha did not hesitate to leave her PhD (which she had only recently started) because coming to the United States had been her dream. Her preference at the time would have been to continue her studies in the same academic field (i.e., cognitive linguistics), but simply coming to the United States was of greater importance, even if it meant focusing on teaching. As she stated in Interview 1: "I'd love to do something in cognitive linguistics, but then I really wanted to come to the U.S. to study, to tell you the truth. It has been my dream for about ten years." (Interview 1)

My assessment of Natasha at the beginning of the study—one with which she wholeheartedly agreed—was that she was supremely confident in her academic skills, teaching and otherwise. Her goals were nothing if not grand. She stated that she wanted, among other things, to reform the textbooks that were used in English classes in her native country. Her ambition did not end at language education, however, as she could also see herself becoming the president of her home country one day.

Due to her near-native fluency in English, Natasha enjoyed an elevated status (among English teachers) back home. Based on her English skills and academic performance, her supervising teachers trusted her to such a degree that they never even observed her classes. Thus, ESL Methods presented a rather different challenge for Natasha. When she talked about her encounters with NSs prior to coming to the United States, they all had in common that she received and enjoyed high praise for her impressive English skills. In ESL Methods, however, she encountered NSs as classmates for the first time; in addition, the other NNSs possessed formidable English skills and had, in some cases, extensive English teaching experience. In other words, Natasha no longer stood out simply because of her language skills. As I stated earlier, Natasha was supremely confident at the beginning of the year. During the fall term her confidence dipped, partly due to Natasha comparing herself unfavorably to the NSs. Before, she had never thought of NSs as *better* than herself, in regards to teaching or otherwise. She wrote about this in her first journal entry. Where previously she had been sure about her qualities as a teacher or speaker of English, encountering NSs in class had left her uncertain.

> Excerpt 26: *Now I'm not sure if I'm such a good teacher compared to native speakers whose vocabulary is so much richer*, and the methods they use in their English Language Center[2] classes seem very good, too. *Never felt like this before as we didn't have any native speakers at my university in her home country.* (Journal 1)

Later in the semester, her already lowered confidence was exacerbated when Natasha felt that her attempt at teaching pragmatics was, in Natasha's estimation, harshly criticized, stating

---

[2] The participants sometimes referred to the English Language Center as ELC. For purposes of clarity, I have chosen to change every instance of ELC to English Language Center throughout the manuscript.

that NNSs have to be careful with this kind of content. This left Natasha with the feeling that her being a NNS, in spite of her near-native fluency, limited her in regards to what she could and could not do in the classroom. This episode stuck with Natasha and she came back to it repeatedly over the course of her first year. Here is what Natasha had to say about it in her second journal entry at the end of ESL Methods (Excerpt 27) and later during Interview 2 (Excerpt 28). The fact that she commented on it multiple times showed that the incident (without intention) clearly left a mark on her and had affected her confidence negatively.

> Excerpt 27: [B]efore coming to the U.S. *I had never thought that native speakers are better language teachers than non-natives*, but I started thinking so especially after I did my activity presentation on pragmatics *and the instructor said that non-natives should not be teaching pragmatics because it is difficult to teach and we, non-natives, are not so good at it ourselves*. For some reason, I started having doubts as to whether I chose the right profession and if I am/can be a good teacher. *But then I saw Maya teaching, and her teaching demonstration was great (I think it was the best) and that was the time when I got my confidence back.* (Journal 2)

Interestingly, what seemed to help Natasha's confidence at this stage was to see Maya give a particularly successful lesson demonstration. This showed her that simply by virtue of being a NNS, she was not excluded from being a good teacher. As I said earlier, however, she remained insecure about her ability to be an English teacher. During Interview 2 she, again, wondered out loud if she was limited in her chosen profession simply by virtue of being a NNS.

> Excerpt 28: "We had to present an activity and I chose conflict resolution. I don't

remember what it was about, but yeah, it was about pragmatics. That's for sure. [The instructor] said that as a nonnative speaker, you have to be very careful choosing what you teach your students. *I was like, so what do I do? If I'm limited as a teacher because I'm not a native speaker, what do I do? Do I not teach it?*" (Interview 2)

While Natasha remained somewhat defiant about this particular issue, she also became aware of how little she had previously learned in terms of teaching skills and materials design, in spite of having tutored and taught for many years before coming to the program. In her home country, she never had to autonomously come up with a lesson plan, create materials, and think of learning objectives and ways to achieve them. During this two-class sequence (ESL Methods/Practicum), however, this made up a large percentage of the teachers' responsibilities. In her first journal entry, she wrote about how this confirmed what she had already assumed about English teaching in her home country, namely, that it was subpar.

> Excerpt 29: *I have a feeling that back home teachers, at least some (including me), aren't all that creative in their choice of the material and activities; we just follow the curriculum and don't have to think about the objectives* for each class because all we need to do is to cover a certain amount of material in each class and that's it. *Methods we use are not so good—now I know it for a fact.* (Journal 1)

Seeing her teaching in her home country as deficient also led Natasha to another sober re-evaluation about her own teaching self. At different times throughout the year, I asked the

participants how their ideas about what makes a good language teacher had changed. After her first semester, Natasha wrote in her second journal entry not about what makes a good teacher, but what she thought made a bad one: self-centeredness. While she began her answer as an objective statement, it quickly turned into a criticism of her past and present teaching self (although it could also be seen as a critique of teacher trainees in general).

> Excerpt 30: *I came to understand that teaching is actually about the students not about the teachers. I know it sounds a little strange because it is somewhat obvious but it is not.* Some teachers are so caught up in their lesson plans and interesting, from their point of view, and often difficult activities that they sometimes forget who they are doing it for. While presenting my first activity, all *I was thinking about was how to be (or seem to be) a good teacher and I took the students out of the equation. That is what a good language teacher should not do*. (Journal 2)

It is clear that this teaching methods class had negatively affected Natasha's confidence in herself and her teaching ability. Importantly, all of this happened before she actually stepped into a real-life classroom. Simply coming up against other highly qualified graduate students and having her own teaching ability questioned (for the first time) led to Natasha experiencing, in no uncertain terms, an identity crisis. Although, she passed ESL Methods with a good grade, she admitted that after the criticism that she received in the class she was initially certain that she had failed the class. Her responses during Interview 2, about a month after the conclusion of ESL Methods, showed how tumultuous her first semester had been for her.

Beyond the criticism, however, Natasha's teaching experience from her home country

also clearly clashed with what she learned in ESL Methods. The instructor favored a more communicative approach with which Natasha and one of the other teachers (a NS; not a focal participant) clashed. Natasha frequently referred to this aspect of her teacher self as a 'traditionalist'. Natasha struggled with this new approach, because she had never been faced with anything remotely like it in her entre teaching career up to this point.

As for the criticism of her teaching, Natasha did not take it well. After her first teaching demonstration was, in her opinion, roundly criticized, she even felt unsure about her career choice. ("After my first teaching demonstration… I came home and told my roommate that I must have made a mistake choosing this profession." Interview 2) Nevertheless, later in the semester, Natasha felt like she was "improving", i.e., becoming accustomed to the more or less prescribed communicative approach in her teaching demonstrations. Natasha's insecurities neither solely stemmed from her inexperience with this teaching approach nor from the fact that she, at times, felt judged differently because of her status as a NNS. She also appeared to feel slightly intimidated and frustrated by how well Maya was received both by the professors and other students. This is not to say that she did not like Maya, but Maya's previous experience appeared to propel her to the top of the class hierarchy, both during class as a student and when she was giving teaching demonstrations. For the first time, Natasha's excellent English skills were not enough to set her apart and, even worse for Natasha, another NNS received praise instead of her.

Part 2 - The practicum semester

By the time her second semester started, Natasha had become very critical of her teaching skills. When I asked her what she thought of her teaching skills during Interview 2, she only

mentioned weaknesses, e.g., her lacking lesson planning skills (something which she had never

had to do in her home country). I directly asked her about some positives to which she responded

that she was able to teach grammar well and that her students in her home country liked her as a

person because she was more accessible than the older teachers. While Natasha was not

particularly happy with her own communicative teaching skills, she was also not overly

impressed by most of the other teachers. For example, she thought that the NS teachers were

sometimes not really teaching anything during their demonstrations; they were just keeping the

students busy.

Natasha was proactive about her insecurities regarding this new type of teaching that was

expected of her. She met with the instructor and was relieved to find out that, as a matter of fact,

not everything that went on in the classroom had to be communicative. Natasha mentioned this

office visit when she was reflecting on her developing ideas about characteristics of a successful

language teacher. She had added *flexibility* to her list of traits that define an effective language

instructor.

> Excerpt 31: Communicative language teaching, I went to see [the instructor]
>
> about, I don't know what it was, some activity. *I told her I don't know if it's*
>
> *communicative or not, and she told me that not everything has to be*
>
> *communicative. I loved her at that moment. I'm like, thank you.* I understand that
>
> it's limited what you can do that you wanted to be communicative. You can't
>
> teach all of this stuff in a communicative way, so don't worry about it. Just being
>
> aware of multiple approaches and multiple ways of teaching stuff, I think that's
>
> very important, and feeling where your students are at this particular point in this
>
> particular class because they might be different next week. *So a teacher would*

have to adapt. (Interview 2)

Natasha's lack of confidence was observable in practice during the first classes she taught as part of the practicum. I observed how Natasha seemed to defer to her NS co-teacher, Katherine, more than what I thought was necessary. [This is a similar issue that I had encountered in a previous practicum-centered, two-case study (Wolff, under review), the difference being that Natasha had near-native fluency, while the Chinese participant in my earlier study had a much lower proficiency in English.] During our first stimulated verbal report meeting, Natasha began by mentioning how she had followed Katherine's advice regarding two activities during the planning stages. Neither of these recommendations actually worked out very well and Natasha thought she should have stayed with her original plan. I followed up in an attempt to find out why Katherine had such an influence in the first place. This quickly revealed Natasha's lack of trust in her own teaching as Excerpt 32 demonstrates.

Excerpt 32:

Again, I talked with Katherine, and she thought I should let them choose which questions to discuss. I don't think it was such a good idea because they ended up discussing the same questions, and they didn't think about the other ones. *I should have gone with my initial idea*, and just assigning questions to each group so we would have all the questions covered. (Dominik: So that was also Katherine's idea?)

Yeah. (Dominik: Why do you rely so much on Katherine's ideas?) Good question. (Laughs) Maybe I get influenced by people easily. […] I don't know. *Because she has more experience teaching here in the U.S., and she's been doing it for the*

whole semester now? For some reason, I think she knows more, which she probably doesn't. I don't know. […] *I think I just don't trust my judgment when I talk to people about [my materials]. I think I should trust myself more.* (Interview 2)

Sitting in on this class, it was easy for me to observe that Natasha was not really implementing well (or at all) a number of the things she had learned about during ESL Methods in the previous semester. The objectives of the class were unclear to me as an outside observer and there was no review at any point to assure that the students had learned whatever the objective might have been. Activities seemed aimless and her instructions not entirely clear, as could be witnessed from the students' behavior during the class and on the video. Natasha concurred on this point, commenting on her listless students at one point:

Excerpt 33: They [have such] blank looks [on their faces]. *They were not engaged and they were bored.* I don't know if they were bored, or ... I don't know what they were thinking, but I looked at them and I realized that, *I don't want to be in their place right now. I don't want to feel the way they're feeling.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

During this verbal report, Natasha stopped the video at one point as we were watching a sentence-matching activity that seemed to confuse the students more than it helped. She admitted that this class activity had been thoroughly criticized when she presented it as part of a lesson demonstration in ESL Methods. While Natasha had made some changes on her lesson plan, she stubbornly went back to the original as she was teaching it.

90

Excerpt 34: I then looked after the class was over, I looked at the lesson plan, and I realized that I changed it the way I presented it the first time in my teaching demonstration in 895. *I realized that it wasn't going to work. I changed it a little bit, but in class I still did the thing that I did the first time.* […] [The class instructor], she just knew it, and *I was stubborn enough to still do it*. She said, "It's not clear. Your instructions are not clear. […] You either have to work on it and change it, or do something else." And I said, "Okay." *I did it anyway*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

Clearly, Natasha was stuck in limbo as far as her teaching identity was concerned. On the one hand, she was grateful to have learned valuable techniques and to have received important advice in the preparation class. She pointed out that previously, in her home country, she had "never had any good, formal teacher training" (Stimulated Verbal Report 1). On the other hand, she seemed hesitant to let go of her previous teacher-self and embrace a more communicative and less teacher-centered approach. Natasha had earlier been reflecting on self-centeredness as a negative trait for any teacher, a trait which she had identified in herself. In my first observations, I realized that, in the classroom, she could not shake this part of her teaching self completely, at least not right away. For one, her first two classes were more teacher-oriented than any of the other three participants' early in the practicum. Moreover, I recognized that she selected some of her material primarily because of her interest in the subject matter (she used clips from a TV show dealing with politics and corruption), even though it was hardly useful for the student population. She was well aware of this: "The thing is, they don't really need this information. They don't really need this knowledge at all. [For them] it was just a waste of time again."

91

(Stimulated Verbal Report 1) Natasha was self-critical and acknowledged her slightly egotistic

streak that was clearly hampering her teaching.

> Excerpt 35: I think I was very selfish, not selfish, *I was self-oriented. I didn't think*
> *about the students that much.* My revelation from last semester was like, "Oh,
> wait. It's not about me." But I'm still under the influence. […] [In the past] *I*
> *wouldn't be really concerned about what students learned language-wise*. I was
> always interested in finding something that is interesting and new to them in
> terms of content. *I definitely always had content objectives, I never had language*
> *objectives*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

In her home country, Natasha used to be a very confident teacher whose English skills

compared favorably to other teachers. A NS's presence (Katherine) in the classroom certainly

had an effect on Natasha's self-confidence, but mostly Natasha was clinging to her old teaching

self in a new context and it was not working out. By the end of this first stimulated verbal report,

I asked Natasha about how her view of herself as a teacher aligned with what she saw in the

video of herself teaching. Her response was that she thought she had been a better teacher before

she started the program. She again referenced her somewhat turbulent experiences in ESL

Methods. When I asked her what the previously positive estimation of her teaching had been

based on, she responded, "My students [in her home country] loved me. That's pretty much it." It

dawned on Natasha that her university students back home had enjoyed her classes because they

were interesting compared to classes taught by other teachers. Her teaching or the learning that

took place during her classes, however, was never mentioned. Natasha felt somewhat dejected

after having watched her own class on video; this presented a stark contrast to the feedback she

was used to receiving from students in her home country. She also spoke about how the compliments she received for her English skills played a role in her self-evaluation as a teacher in her previous EFL context.

> Excerpt 36: My students told me that it's fun to be in my class, how great my English is, how interesting I am, how interesting what I talk about is. *None of them ever said, 'Thank you. I learned so much from your class.'* […] My English was a great advantage. Every time I had students for the first time, and I would just start talking, they would be like, '*Oh wow. Your English is so great.*' I was like, 'Yeah.' *My ego boost of the day*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

At the end of this first stimulated verbal report session, Natasha concluded that her class had been "awful" and that she felt simply like a bad teacher. I continued to observe her classroom but let her reflect on the recording of a second class on her own time in the form of a written journal. She wrote mainly about two larger concerns she had. These related to the NS/NNS subject, on the one hand, and her lack of feeling sufficiently prepared to teach well on the other.

The presence of a NS in the classroom with her continued to influence Natasha's teaching negatively. Natasha struggled to understand why her own (considerable) confidence evaporated when her NS colleague (and friend) was present in the room. Even though she knew that she was perfectly capable of answering student-questions herself, her automatic response was to seek reassurance from her teaching partner.

> Excerpt 37: "For some reason when Katherine is in the *room subconsciously I feel inferior to her*, as if she knows stuff better than I do. When a student asks a

93

question, *my initial reaction is to look at her* and kind of see what she thinks, *although most of the time I know the answers to their questions.*" (Stimulated Verbal Report 2)

Sometimes, the NS teacher would add to Natasha's vocabulary explanations, which left Natasha feeling negative for two reasons. For one, there was, of course, the doubt that her explanations were not sufficient, which further affected her self-confidence. Beyond that, however, she also felt regret that, again, she was so focused on herself. The students, as she pointed out, might benefit from the NS teacher's additions to the class discussion when Natasha was the lead teacher. Thus, her frustrations were two-fold: Her NNS-status necessitated that she, at times, accept help from her NS colleague, a situational need she resented; but the resentment was steeped in guilt. She knew the students benefited from the NS's aid, and Natasha knew teaching should be all about the students' needs (and not her own needs).

> Excerpt 38: "*I feel like my explanation of words is not good enough when Katherine adds something to it. And I feel kind of guilty about it because I make it more about me than about my students*, though I realize they benefit from hearing different kinds of explanations of the same word, it helps them understand it better." (Stimulated Verbal Report 2)

Natasha continued to reflect on her status as a NNS and wondered about the supposed pros that come from being a NNS. The practicum instructor had discussed some of these advantages NNSs have over NSs in one of their meetings at the beginning of the semester and prior to the commencement of the MA students teaching their classes. The advantages mentioned

included, for example, knowledge of grammar rules and their own experience as English learners. However, the actual application of these supposed strengths escaped Natasha. This appeared to be yet another source of frustration for her.

> Excerpt 39: *Everybody says that as a non-native speaker I can put my experience to good use in the classroom* since I had to learn English just like my students but it seems to me that I'm not really doing it. *So it makes me wonder how I can actually do that*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 2)

This was one area in which Natasha, in her written reflection, described herself as underprepared for the classroom. She also seemed to struggle with turning theory into practice. For example, she stated that she was still "wondering what language objectives can be like" and felt like she needed "more explicit instruction" on such practical matters. (Stimulated Verbal Report 2)

Her teaching self halfway through the practicum seemed stuck between her old teaching self from her time as an English teacher in her home country and a new one that she was slowly constructing. This could be seen when Natasha tried to conform more to the kind of teaching she thought was expected of her during that same class. It has to be noted that his particular lesson was special in that the practicum instructor/supervisor was observing half of her class (one hour), which resulted in added pressure to produce her *best* teaching in front of two NSs. At one point during this class, Natasha was providing corrective feedback on a student's pronunciation, but Natasha changed her normal correction style due to the professor's presence. This may be partly attributable to her not wanting to spend too much time on corrections with her teacher present, but Natasha also actively tried not to display the teacher-self that her previous instructor had

called a "traditionalist."

> Excerpt 40: "When [the student] had trouble pronouncing the word "procrastinate" I asked him to say it over and over again, and still it wasn't quite right, and *I'm pretty sure if I was the only teacher in the room (if the supervisor and Katherine weren't there) I would ask him to say it as many times as necessary until he would get it right.*" (Stimulated Verbal Report 2)

At this stage about halfway through the six-week practicum, Natasha's teacher identity was very much in limbo. She described herself as willing to change and, indeed, as the above example shows, she did alter her teaching approach to a certain extent. The biggest struggle that remained was how to apply what she had learned in ESL Methods to her teaching practice. The years of guidance-free teaching of quite proficient university students in her home country still dominated how Natasha approached the classroom, i.e. she focused more on interesting content than language.

I met Natasha again for a third and final stimulated verbal reports session. For the session I had video-recorded the last class she taught by herself. During this session, Natasha mostly commented on what she thought was a lack in preparation and practice opportunities. In particular, she was frustrated during this class by a very talkative student in her class. Apparently, in the course of the semester Natasha had become increasingly irritated with the student's behavior. It was during this verbal report session that Natasha voiced her frustration. Her exasperation was not solely aimed at the student; rather, her disappointment extended to the fact that she had never learned how to deal with problematic students. The following excerpt includes her commentary about both what happened in the class and the limited advice she had

previously received for handling such a confrontation.

Excerpt 41: Oh my God, that girl. I just don't know how to deal with her. […]If she could, she would probably talk for two hours. I'm trying to be nice and I interrupt her sometimes […] and then I call on somebody else and they start saying something and then she interrupts them and again says something! […] That freaking girl would just talk while [another student] was speaking. I had to interrupt [the other student], which I don't want to do ever, because you don't interrupt people who barely speak. […] And she was like, 'Oh, I'm sorry.' 'Yeah, great. It's like the 100th time that you're doing this. You're sorry. *[The instructor of ESL Methods told us] you have to deal with students who ask too many questions and talk too much."* But she just said, *"You have to deal with them." Thank you, I know that.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

Natasha built on this criticism about the preparation she had received during ESL Methods. In addition to her voicing her unhappiness about a lack of guidance for dealing with classroom issues, such as problematic students, she extended this criticism to other facets of the classroom. For example, she wanted to know more activity types to teach vocabulary with. (Most of the very advanced practicum students wanted to increase their vocabulary.) In trying to use communicative vocabulary exercises, Natasha ended up repeating the same type of activity over and over. She pointed out that a greater variety could benefit both her and her students.

Excerpt 42: I wish somebody just gave me a list of, I don't know, 100 activities I could choose from because *they say, 'It should be communicative.'* There are, like, three types of communicative [vocabulary] activities and you can't do them

97

all the time. Then there's fill in the blank, which probably not everybody likes, but we ultimately just do it all the time. *I wish there was some more preparation, like practical stuff, which there isn't.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

While this makes Natasha appear very critical of the class on ESL Methods, her major complaint was actually that it ended. She explicitly stated that she would prefer "constant guidance" in the form of teaching methods classes "throughout the entire program" rather than just two classes on teaching methodology. More importantly, though, she missed the opportunity to teach concurrently for a larger stretch of time; in a perfect world, she said she would teach her own classes for the duration of the program the way the two NSs in the study did. Due to her status as a scholarship holder, she was, however, prohibited from working at the university in any official capacity. While Natasha wavered with regards to whether she did or did not like teaching throughout the year, she predicted that teaching more might increase her level of satisfaction with her own development. Also, while she was not entirely satisfied with the program and her progress as a teacher, Natasha did acknowledge how much better it was compared to her previous textbook-dominated experiences in her home country.

Excerpt 43: I was actually thinking I can get a teaching assistantship at the English Language Center. I can get a job there. Do they need volunteers? *Because I really want to do it. Because I feel like the more I do it, the more comfortable I am.* I don't know. I think I like teaching. […] *On the other hand, when I remember what I was teaching back home […] That stupid textbook […] it drove me nuts.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

Part 3 – The end of year one

I conducted a final interview after the completion of the practicum semester. This interview gave me the chance to discuss my various findings as well as my observations throughout the year with Natasha. Furthermore, it gave me the opportunity to find out how far Natasha's teaching self had developed in her own opinion.

When I asked Natasha about the biggest change she had undergone in her first year, she replied: "*Before, I taught very intuitively. I taught how I'd been taught*. Now, I know different methods and I know their [the methods'] names." We engaged in a lengthy discussion about the recurring subject of her struggles to find the usefulness in the communicative approach to language teaching, which was favored in the program. I was surprised when she first said that CLT was "good." When I probed further, however, she conceded that that was basically the message she kept hearing in the different classes. At this point she commented on the class on 'Pedagogical Grammar', which she had concurrently been enrolled in during the practicum semester. Grammar classes usually provide the one context where NNSs have a clear advantage over NSs due to their own process of going through learning the language (Braine, 2010; Medgyes, 1992). While this was no different here (and the NSs make mention of this fact in the next chapter), CLT made another appearance when, as part of the class, grammar teaching was discussed. Natasha did not agree with the instructor's insistence on making grammar activities communicative.

> Excerpt 44: *I don't think grammar should be taught that way, seriously*. [The instructor of the grammar class] says, "If you can do it, you should just do it. It doesn't work with all of the functions or structures so you can't do it always. If you can you should try." I don't know. Should I? It's just a waste of time.

(Interview 3)

According to Natasha, she felt there was an unspoken agreement between the faculty members that everything should be taught communicatively if at all possible. In other words, forms should not be taught using metalinguistic terms, such as 'modal verb' (Natasha's example), but rather inductively over time. At this point, Natasha again referred to herself as a more *traditional* teacher, which, she added, "is a swear word here" (Interview 3). With reference to the instructional approach professors favored in the program, she exclaimed "[o]n the other hand, they're so progressive with this, a little too progressive" (Interview 3). This insistence on using communicative methods when teaching grammar was somewhat infuriating to Natasha because traditional methods that might include rote memorization had worked very well for her. From that perspective, it is understandable that she would wonder why the usefulness of such methods was questioned in the first place. In the following excerpt, Natasha talks about how she had memorized lists of gerunds and to-infinitives, but in the grammar class, to her frustration, had to come up with a speaking activity to teach them.

> Excerpt 45: *That's what I did when I was learning. I never mix them up. I know them well; how come it doesn't work, why is it bad?* If it worked for me, it worked for a bunch of other people that I know and for millions of people that I don't know. *It's unfair to say that it doesn't work because my experience shows that it does.* (Interview 3)

This shows a clear discrepancy between how she was taught in her home country and how she was now expected to teach. While she acknowledged that she had learned practical

skills about lesson planning, etc., the fact remained that she had near-native fluency in spite of (or because of) the more rigid, old-fashioned teaching methods that professors in the MA program outright told her were undesirable.

Natasha's reflection on this episode from the pedagogical grammar class prompted her to go on a rant about some of the content and the accepted ideas among the TESOL faculty. Here, Natasha's earlier education in a clearly more prescriptivist environment shone through. It became obvious that she was not about to change her mind about these issues simply because professors supported a different point of view in this program. She looked at languages as something that should be protected. She made it clear that she remained a firm believer in standard varieties of languages as well. I believe that Excerpt 46 and the views Natasha espouses in it are best understood against the backdrop of the language revitalization efforts that took place in her home country post-1990. Language standards and the question of 'good' versus 'bad' language use had been a constant presence during Natasha's entire life. In this light, her strong views are all the more understandable. (For more on language revitalization in post-Soviet states, see Bilaniuk, 2005; Friedman, 2010.)

> Excerpt 46: *[They say:] Interlanguage is a language in itself. No, it's not. They say it's not deficient. Yes, it is. I think I told you that. World Englishes, they're not deficient. Yes, they are.* I think I'll die thinking that. I don't think anybody can change it just because of how much I love the language. *I don't like it when people change Russian either. Not change, but just make errors and say stuff that is incorrect.* I love it because language is beautiful and why not at least try to get there? (Interview 3)

At this point in the interview, I engaged in a debate with Natasha about her views on non-standard varieties of English. In particular, I presented her with the viewpoint that these varieties (such as African-American Vernacular English or Indian English) are perfectly viable in their own right and that so-called standard varieties are created (by an empowered group) rather than a natural occurrence. Eventually, we agreed that Natasha preferred the standard variety, although she conceded that she would not be able to define exactly what the standard is. She also agreed with my suggestion that the more rigid system in which she had learned (and later taught) English had left a strong impression on her. Language forms that deviate from her perceived standard bothered her and, according to her, most likely always will. Natasha demanded perfection as a goal for herself, and she was clear that she would demand it from her future students. Non-standard varieties that allow for deviant forms make this pursuit for perfection impossible. Another view about language learning that Natasha was very vocal about was the idea that NNS can never achieve NS-like proficiency. This theory was presented in the class on interlanguage analysis and it provoked a strong reaction from Natasha. She saw it as an affront to her own attempts over the years to perfect her language skills. She was also concerned that it would send the wrong message to language learners in general.

> Excerpt 47: On the other hand *there are other theories that say language learners will never get to the level of native speakers, and it's not even worth trying*. *That pisses me off, seriously*. That was in 822 [Interlanguage Analysis] last semester when I heard those theories. […] Yes, but the idea that it's possible just should be there. *You can't tell a language learner, you can't tell <u>me</u> that it's impossible because then I'll just say 'why bother?'* (Interview 3)

At this stage of our final interview, I asked Natasha directly about her thoughts on her developing identity as a teacher. Her answer was very telling: "Now, I'm very well aware of my non-nativeness." In addition, she referenced an article she had recently read by prominent NS/NNS and World Englishes researcher Suresh Canagarajah who has often been critical of how Western TESOL practitioners have commonly treated NNS English teachers (e.g., Canagarajah, 1999). For the first time, Natasha was made to see herself as part of the NNS group with the message being that access to the more privileged NS group could not ever really be granted. With her biggest skill, i.e., her language proficiency, diminished in value, she felt her shortcomings as an ESL teacher (particularly, a communicative one) even more strongly. She opened up about frequently feeling lost in the classroom and often assuming that what she was doing was somehow not right. This was in clear contrast to her past teaching experiences in which she was the only and ultimate authority. It was also a far cry from the very confident person I had met at the beginning of the study.

> Excerpt 48: You see here, *I'm the little kid in the US* because seriously in the classroom *I have serious issues with my capability, serious issues. Before that, I never did. I have never had a problem in my classroom in her home country. I was the ultimate authority there*. I would do what *I* thought was right. *I knew nobody was going to come and tell me, 'This is not right. This is not how you were supposed to do it.'* […] Every time I try to do something I feel like I'm wrong. I'm not good enough for some reason. Do you know what I mean? It's like this fight inside me. (Interview 3)

Natasha and I tried to view Natasha's development in the context of where she was in the

program and the classes she had taken so far. Except for the teaching methods class that preceded the practicum (which had had its own challenges), Natasha felt like the classes did not necessarily help her become a better teacher. She described some classes, such as 'Introduction to Second Language Acquisition,' as "interesting" but the relevance of language acquisition theories to pedagogy to her seemed tenuous at best. To be clear, Natasha did not see this as entirely negative, particularly as she continued to waver between possibly becoming a teacher in the future and moving on to a non-teaching-oriented PhD, such as the one in Cognitive Linguistics, which she had left to come to the United States. When I asked her about her future plans during this last interview, she conceded that she felt "even more lost than the last time we talked". At this stage, Natasha seemed to favor a different path for her future, as she had just discussed with Katherine, her closest friend in the program.

> Excerpt 49: *I wish I wanted to learn how to teach. [...] I have no idea what I'll be doing.* Yesterday, as I was talking to Katherine, *I realized that I don't really care for learners all that much.* I love language. It's amazing. *The mind is amazing. The brain's capacity to produce language is amazing and what it tells us about how great we are.* [...] I enjoy SLA a lot because it just helped me look at the language from all the different perspectives. *It's interesting and I'm thrilled about it. Then when I think about practical application, [sometimes] I don't even want to think about it.* (Interview 3)

A summary and comparison of Maya's and Natasha's trajectories

Maya and Natasha were particularly interesting examples of NNSs because of how profoundly they were both shaped by their home cultures in which they had taught English prior

to their arrival in the United States. One major influence was how teachers are viewed in their

respective home countries. Maya grew up in a culture that worships teachers as deities (including

an annual holiday), whereas for Natasha English teaching had been a source of personal pride as

she received compliments thanks to her impressive fluency. The amount and quality of teaching

experience prior to beginning the MATESOL also cannot be underestimated. Due to her status as

a near-native English speaker, Natasha lacked any supervision of her teaching for the entire time

she taught classes in her home country, although she explained that this was normal (she noted

that none of the other young teachers at her university were observed, nor were they supervised;

supervision and observation appeared to *not* be part of the teaching-training program). Maya, on

the other hand, was bound by the existing rules of her previous teaching context (i.e., large

classes, little interaction, and no time for student questions). In spite of those challenges, it did

allow her to gain a greater amount and variety of teaching experience than Natasha.

Maya's and Natasha's MATESOL experiences really diverged in terms of how well

either teacher adapted to the new teaching and academic context. This in turn strongly affected

the teacher selves they developed over the year. It was apparent that Maya truly embraced the

challenge and actively worked on becoming the type of teacher she felt she needed to be in order

to be successful in this ESL context. Her motivation was both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature.

For one, it was a huge and difficult step for her to leave her kids with their grandparents while

she pursued this degree abroad. At the same, it was the culmination of something she had worked

toward almost her entire life. Outside of that, she was also keenly aware that her employer in her

home country (to whom she will return after her graduate work is finished) expects her, in the

future, to put to good use the knowledge she is gaining from this opportunity.

Even without my prompting, Maya always reflected on her development as a teacher and

she was constantly aware of what features of her teaching personality she wanted to change and which wanted to hold on to. The end result was what she called a more complete teacher; she had added a new teacher-self for this teaching context to the initial teacher-self with which she had started out. Her development even extended outside of the classroom. She slowly freed herself from the academic culture she had experienced as a student and as a teacher. In the process, Maya became something different from a pure "jug and mug" teacher. None of these changes came easy for Maya who constantly spoke of the comfort zone she had to go beyond. However, embracing this change allowed Maya to reach her goal of adding to her teacher identity while holding on to certain aspects of her old self that were important to her. A question that is yet to be answered is, how well this new teacher-self will serve Maya if and when she returns to her old teaching context and the challenges that will await her there.

In direct contrast, Natasha struggled in this new context. Her views on language learning and teaching did not line up with the approaches and ideology favored in this Western setting. Where Maya left her comfort zone, Natasha was hesitant to do so and became stuck between the past and the present. That is, she neither favored the more traditional approach to language teaching used in her home country nor the more communicatively oriented approach in the U.S. MATESOL program. Still, in spite of her direct criticism of teaching methods used in her home country, she defended them when a professor judged them to be inferior to communicative methodologies. Natasha herself had become fluent in this supposedly outdated system and she disapproved of claims that only the newer teaching practices would be successful.

Her status as a NNS was a constant presence in Natasha's data. After years of only receiving praise for her English skills, she suddenly found herself in the lower-status group, as a NNS, rather than at the top of the hierarchy that her language skills had afforded her in her home

country. Natasha frequently framed her confidence issues in light of her speaker status, for example, when she referred to her lack of confidence when her NS colleague was in the classroom during her teaching in the practicum. Beyond that, several NNS-unfriendly events negatively impacted Natasha's self-esteem and development. To her, the message was that her non-native status limited what she could teach and how successful she could become as a teaching professional.

Quite in contrast to Maya's trajectory, Natasha seemed to lose her initial teacher-self without replacing it with something new. She rejected both the traditional teaching methods she had previously used and the, to her, overly progressive push for the use of a communicative approach in the MATESOL program. Here, I would like to consider the career options or lack thereof for both of these participants. Maya's career choices as a female from the part of South Asia she grew up in were always limited. In fact, pursuing English teaching was de facto the only choice she had (and only after following local custom by starting a family). Natasha, on the other hand, stumbled into teaching due to her strong English skills. She became increasingly unsure about being a teacher, but, unlike Maya, she also had the freedom to change her mind if she wanted to. Thus, Natasha's need to assimilate and accept the Western teachings was much less pronounced than Maya's.

Lastly, these two teachers' narratives show that NNSs cannot simply be lumped together. The factors that affect their developing teacher selves are manifold (e.g., culture, personality, motivation, future plans) even before we consider the role the MATESOL experience may have played in shaping these teachers' identities. I will further discuss the varying impact the MA curriculum as well as access to teaching opportunities had on all of the participants at the end of chapter five when I compare the four teachers' developmental trajectories during their first year.

CHAPTER 5

THE NESTs

The inspiration to become an English teacher was different for the two NESTs in this study when compared to the NNESTs' original motivations. Whereas the English language had played a major role in the lives of the NNESTs and their ultimate decision to teach English, the two NEST participants both stumbled into teaching English more or less by accident. Neither of the two NESTs had, in fact, pursued undergraduate degrees in TESOL, linguistics, or a teaching-related field. English language teaching only became a goal for them when their previous career choices either lost their appeal (Katherine) or did not work out due to unforeseen circumstances (Rebecca). Both NESTs completed short TEFL certifications in addition to having spent time as EFL teachers. The value of these certification programs in both of their opinions was very limited and, as a consequence, both NESTs expressed their desire to *really* learn how to teach English well during their MA. Unlike Maya and Natasha whose tuition and costs were covered through their scholarship program, both Katherine and Rebecca had received teaching assignments in the English Language Center that covered their tuition and paid them a stipend. Thus, they were each teaching two ESL classes in the Intensive English Program to prospective undergraduate students each semester in addition to their own classwork. Clearly, this sort of *tracking* (differential paths through the program depending on native-speaker status) had an effect on the four participants' developmental trajectories, and I will discuss the effect the additional teaching practice had on Katherine and Rebecca's development.

Katherine

Part 1 – Fall semester (pre-practicum)

Katherine's English-teaching journey that would eventually land her in this MATESOL program began when she tutored speakers of Spanish as a volunteer during her undergraduate studies. Having double-majored in Advertising and Spanish, Katherine worked for an advertising agency for one and a half years post-graduation. She missed using Spanish, however, and so began tutoring NSs of Spanish (she taught them English; they helped her a little bit in Spanish), which she set up via her contacts in the volunteer-tutoring department at her former university. This led to the realization that she actually enjoyed tutoring English more than her regular job. After she returned to the United States from teaching abroad, Katherine researched MATESOL programs and decided that she would need at least some classroom experience to gain admission to a quality program. She decided to complete an online TEFL certification program for which she also had to complete an English-teaching practicum. For that Katherine sought out an English-teaching opportunity at a local multicultural center in her city where she would teach informal classes to immigrants and refugees. Katherine described this TEFL certificate as a "crash course" for people like her who wanted to go teach abroad. Once she had successfully finished this certificate class, Katherine taught English to university students in a Spanish-speaking country, where she had previously spent time studying abroad as a student herself. She taught there for six months and returned to the United States. She then applied to MATESOL programs and then learned that she had been admitted to the MATESOL program of her choice.

As Katherine pointed out in my initial interview with her, the few English classes she had taught thus far were very informal, and she was looking forward to receiving a thorough teacher education that had structure and a solid curriculum. Her greatest weakness at the beginning of the program, according to Katherine herself, was that she neither had much experience teaching a variety of grammar, nor had she taught diverse classrooms with students with whom she did not

109

share a common language (Spanish). In both her previous tutoring and teaching experiences the focus had been on conversational skills and specific test preparation rather than the teaching of any particular linguistic skills. In response to my question where her strengths as a teacher lay, she pointed to her communication skills as well as the joy she finds in working with people and seeing them improve. At the time this interview took place she had recently begun teaching two intermediate-level speaking-listening classes in the English Language Center and was enjoying the new experience with a diverse English language learner population.

> Excerpt 50: I feel like I'm a very communicative person and I like, like I said, I really enjoy speaking and listening; that's the classes that I'm teaching right now. *I just enjoy working with people, the different personalities and I just like the human aspect of teaching* and I like seeing how your input can *[...] I like seeing the effects of your teaching*, it's really rewarding to see how your students improve and not only to get them passed into the next level but just to see their level of confidence increase. (Interview 1)

In her limited teacher preparation prior to the MA, she did learn about CLT as a desirable teaching approach and thought that it played to her strengths as "a good communicator." When I asked her whether there was any difference in her personality inside and outside the classroom, she responded that she was "probably a little more reserved outside of the classroom than in the classroom, but I wouldn't say there's a huge difference" (Interview 1). Her main goal and the main reason for her pursuing the MA in TESOL were to "learn good teaching." Her definition of good teaching was firmly focused on the learners' comfort level as well as the teacher's knowledge of the subject being taught. From her answers it was clear that her teaching

personality took care of the students' comfort, but the latter needed some work, which the MA program would, hopefully, provide.

Excerpt 51: *[A good teacher is] [s]omeone who cares*, first off. If you don't care about your students if you don't care about doing good work what's the point of being a teacher? That's what it's all about. *You need to know what you're talking about; you don't want to teach your students anything incorrect.* You should be flexible; *you have to be able to relate to other people and try to see things from other people's perspectives*, especially working in ESL *when you have students from all different cultures*. (Interview 1).

With regards to the development as a teacher and, implicitly, her identity as a teacher, Katherine predicted no major changes as a result of her training in the program. In her first journal entry, she referred to some additions to her repertoire, but all of them related to teaching techniques or methods rather than any fundamental change in how she would teach classes.

Excerpt 52: *I think I'll adopt new strategies for teaching, but I don't think my overall teaching style will change significantly. I consider my teaching style to be very interactive*, and like to have my students do more of the talking than me— especially when teaching a speaking class as I am right now [in the English Language Center]. *In general, I think that I will maintain this interactive teaching style, but also incorporate techniques and practices I've learned in the MA program into it.* (Journal 1)

In response to a question about what had affected the way she sees herself as a teacher,

111

Katherine wrote that her concurrent teaching assignment in the English Language Center (two classes) had had a profound effect. This had marked her first exposure to students with a different first language than her own second language (i.e., Spanish). Teaching these groups of students had boosted her confidence greatly. In her own words: "I've learned that it truly is possible to teach English to students with whom you do not share a language (before I wasn't so sure). *I now see myself as a teacher who is fully capable of doing this*" (Journal 1). Furthermore, the experience had also solidified her poise in other challenging situations, such as dealing with unruly students. Once again, in Katherine's own words: "[…] my work at the English Language Center has given me *much more exposure than I've had in the past to classroom management and dealing with disruptive students or students with inappropriate behavior*. I now believe that *I can handle such situations much more effectively than I could before* (Journal 1).

Being a *real* teacher in the English Language Center clearly had a substantial effect on Katherine and made her feel much more prepared for the classroom. She also hailed the coursework in 'ESL Methods,' which made her feel that she had "more of a formal teacher training." This in turn led Katherine to have more confidence in herself "as a teacher and in her ability to effectively teach students." It is interesting to note that, if we compare these statements with the hopes and expectations she had for the program in Interview 1, she basically reached her goals before the end of her first semester. She was in the very least well on her way of becoming the teacher she envisioned: Somebody who can effectively teach classrooms with students with whom she does not share a language by using a variety of teaching techniques.

The journal prompts that I distributed at the end of the first semester (Journal 2) included a question about how her idea of what makes a good language teacher had evolved during the term. Her answer was insightful mostly in how it contrasted with the responses given by the two

NNESTs. Both of them had been primarily concerned with their changing teacher selves, particularly with the conflicts between their past teacher selves and the teachers they felt they were supposed to be in their new context. Katherine, again, did not express any concern with changes to her overall teacher identity, but, instead, focused on the mechanics of being a teacher. For her, a good teacher was 1) adept at creating lesson plans and materials, 2) someone who thinks critically about their teaching practices and modifies them if necessary, and 3) someone who attempts to keep all of the students engaged throughout the class.

My second extensive interview with Katherine at the beginning of the second semester and prior to the teaching portion of the practicum showed how far Katherine had come toward achieving her goals and what had been the greatest aid in doing so. Unlike the NNESTs, who were on external scholarships, both Katherine and Rebecca had received English teaching assistantships. Hence, from the first day, they taught two ESL classes four times a week. As I attempted to discern the influence of her academic coursework versus her teaching assignment, Katherine's answers made it clear that the almost-daily teaching had had the biggest impact. Interestingly, her responses detailing her improved teaching skills and increased confidence in her teaching contrasted with Natasha's, who was incidentally also Katherine's teaching partner during the practicum. Natasha decried her problems with class management in general and an unruly student in particular; in doing so, she criticized the lack of preparation she had received in this regard before entering the practicum. While Natasha only became aware of her own problems in the area of class management during the practicum, Katherine suggested that her teaching assignment had allowed her to markedly improve how she dealt with the students well before the practicum in teaching began. In Excerpt 53 Katherine comments on her developing class-management skills.

Excerpt 53: *I think I developed better classroom management skills and learned how to separate the students who needed to be separated because they talked too much.* I think *I learned how to balance a wider range of skills within one level than I knew how to before*. Just because, there are, there is such a wide range of proficiency within one level here and I'm sure everywhere. Um, but, yeah, giving the students that need the extra help, help. But trying to figure out how to not take away from the students who want more, who want to be challenged and don't need that extra help. So, *I think I learned how to create that balance better than I used to be able to*. (Interview 2)

In fact, when I interviewed Katherine for the second time, she was already well into teaching her second set of ESL classes. Compared to the classes she taught during her first semester, in which she was "lucky" (her own word) with regards to her students' behavior, she had to deal with some disruptions in the first few weeks of the second term. She was, however, very pleased with how comfortable she had become with managing the classroom and how confident she was playing the role of the "disciplinarian." Katherine had realized that being a successful teacher also includes setting boundaries and "doing what needs to be done in order to keep the teaching and learning going." She traced this development essentially to her teaching assignment and her constant work in the classroom with her own students. The students in those classes were young adults and at times Katherine pointed out that treating them as adults did not work out so well. However, thanks to the sheer amount of time spent in the classroom as well as her frequent mentoring by other experienced ESL faculty, her confidence in her skills as a teacher grew considerably. Katherine said: "I guess I feel more comfortable […] being a

114

disciplinarian when I need to be. […] *[When there are disruptions] someone has to do something about it; in this case, it's the teacher, and I'm doing that more now than I used to*" (Interview 2).

While Katherine spoke enthusiastically of her experience teaching, she asserted that, of the three classes she took during her first semester, only ESL Methods had real value from a teaching stand point. The other two classes (Introduction to SLA; Research Methods), on the other hand, in her words "have the opportunity to be more practical, but they're not." Here, Katherine's view echoes what the NNESTs, and particularly Natasha, had to say. Some classes may be interesting, but too far removed from what happens in real-life language classrooms; as such they do little to stimulate the development of teachers' skills or their identities. However, Katherine wanted to utilize as much as possible of what she had learned in her MA classes, particularly 'ESL Methods,' but found that she was simply too busy to implement much of what she learned as long as she was in the program.

> Excerpt 54: To be honest, I feel like I would do so much*, I would apply so much more* that I've learned in my classes, such as 895 [ESL Methods], *if I had more time. I feel like once I'm not a student anymore, I will be a better teacher, because I'll have more lesson-planning time.* (Interview 2)

As mentioned earlier it was common for NSs and NNSs to be paired together during 'ESL Methods.' Katherine, who, of course, belonged to the (traditionally) more privileged group NS, saw this as a positive. It was telling that my question on her thoughts about the constant pairing of NSs and NNSs in the classes made her immediately think of the one instance where NNSs might have an advantage, the pedagogical grammar class, rather than ESL Methods where her nativeness made her something of a mentor for the NNSs throughout the entire semester.

Excerpt 55 shows her response to the question in full.

Excerpt 55: OK, *so the first thing I thought of was [the grammar class]*. I think that it is really helpful, when we're talking- because then it's one person who has learned this grammar as a language learner versus me, who, I've never learned it; I acquired it. *So, it's interesting to see what they [the NNSs] say when we're given sentences to say, you know, 'Is this grammatical structure correct? Is it acceptable?'* And then, I think we would, yeah, I'm glad she [the instructor] does that because I think we would get, well, we do get very different results when it's just native and native, or non-native and non-native paired up, *so I like that a lot*. (Interview 2)

Katherine said that she enjoyed working with NNSs throughout the year and found that one advantage of the availability of advanced NNSs was that she could ask her NNS colleagues their opinions about her materials. For example, for the practicum she was paired up with Natasha and Katherine frequently tried out the vocabulary she wanted to use in the class. As she put it, "If I can teach Natasha, I can teach anybody." (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

Part 2 - The practicum semester

It is important that I restate how differently both NSs viewed the practicum when compared to the NNSs. Whereas the NNSs were both anxious about teaching ESL for the first time but also looking forward to their only chance to teach ESL at all during the program, the NSs had already one-and-a-half semesters of regular ESL teaching under their belts thanks to their teaching assistant assignments. While changes in their teacher selves were readily

116

observable in both NNSs, I had to rely a lot more on the NSs' introspection during the stimulated verbal reports and the final interview. This was particularly true for Katherine's data. As mentioned above, it appeared that it had taken Katherine only about a semester's worth of teaching in addition to one of her own MA classes (ESL Methods) to become the teacher she wanted to be, that is, a more comfortable and, in terms of teaching methods, better prepared version of her initial teaching self.

In my class observations of Katherine, I saw a friendly and interactive teacher, which is exactly how she had described her teacher-self in the very first interview. Katherine appeared quite confident and followed her lesson plans to make sure to use a variety of task types and group configurations, which was always stressed in 'ESL Methods.' In contrast to the undergraduate ESL classes she was teaching, the students in her practicum class were not only very advanced but also more mature. The combination of Katherine's recent classroom experience with a, compared with her other classes, well-behaved adult student population made for a comfortable, low-pressure class atmosphere (with the exception of days the supervisor came to observe a class). Additionally, with Natasha she had her friend and co-teacher present at all times and many of the usual obligations teachers have to deal with, such as homework and grading, were not part of the practicum set-up. In sum, Katherine was very much at ease teaching conversation classes in this environment.

I touched on the relationship between Natasha and Katherine in chapter four. Natasha was sometimes upset with herself for looking to Katherine for help, even if she was completely confident that she could answer students' questions herself. Katherine for her own part, and perhaps not only because of her NS status, but also owing to her increased confidence from constant teaching, took on (or continued from ESL Methods) the role of mentor in their

relationship. In the following excerpt from her first stimulated verbal report, she refers to her teaching experience as a current teaching assistant as she is giving Natasha advice on wait time in the classroom.

Excerpt 56: Well, let's go back [in the video] and see how long I waited because *I think I have developed a lot more of a 'feeling comfort' with silence than I started off with in the beginning of last semester*. I waited a good ten seconds or so there, which is much better than I would have done before, and I say "better" because - *this is something Natasha and I actually talked about after she taught her first lesson* last week. *She told me afterward, 'They just didn't seem very engaged," and I was like, "Well, I think a lot of the times, when a question is asked - like, students need a lot more time to process the question than we might think, so it might not be that they're not engaged, it might be that they're still just thinking.'* I've been trying to be more and more conscious of that ever since I started teaching at the [English Language Center] and now here [in the practicum] and I try to not think - I mean, *I think usually it is the fact that they're [the students] still thinking if they're a motivated and paying attention*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

Katherine's written reflection on her second video-recorded class, again, focused very much on the influence her teaching in the English Language Center had had on her. She could see the ways in which she had improved her teaching in the ways she had wanted to. Her classroom management was better ("I think I'm dealing with student silence better and better as I continue teaching!") and her conscious efforts to use different student combinations was also

obvious in her practicum video. She noted: "*I've been trying in my English Language Center classes to work on being more conscious of mixing up groups* when we do group work to avoid always pairing up the same people, which is *something that I noticed myself doing in this lesson too*." While the impact of her English Language Center teaching was overall positive, in one aspect (providing corrective feedback on pronunciation mistakes) Katherine became aware that perhaps she was treating the very advanced practicum group too much like her lower-level English Language Center students. Here she wrote: "I noticed that I modify my speech and enunciate more clearly than I would when speaking with native speakers. *I wonder if I am doing these students a disservice by doing this, given their high level*" (Stimulated Verbal Report 2)*.

Judging from her answers throughout, Katherine seemed to believe that language learners need a NS model to which to aspire. During her last stimulated verbal report meeting with me, for example, she paused the video-recording during a corrective feedback episode. This particular correction had to do with pronunciation, and Katherine's policy was actually to correct pronunciation mistakes when she deemed that a student's pronunciation would cause problems for other NSs who were not English teachers and, therefore, used to non-standard speech.

> Excerpt 57: *I try to put myself in a native English speaker's shoes, one who's not an ESL teacher, who doesn't have a lot of exposure to accented speech*, and I try to think, okay, if this student were talking to a person like that would this result in them not understanding what the student is saying. […] *So, I try to think of that on the spot every time, so did I have a really hard time understanding it?* Because then I know that it's definitely something that I need to correct. Or, *what might I have a hard time understanding it if I weren't so exposed to accented speech.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

By the time of this meeting I had seen all of the teachers in the classroom multiple times. This led to my sometimes asking questions that addressed some of the noticeable differences I had observed among the teachers. In the use of technology, for instance, Maya and Katherine could not have been more different. Katherine rarely wrote anything on the blackboard and relied much more heavily on the computer and projector. When I addressed this, Katherine pointed out that she had never received any formal or informal training in blackboard use and she expressed her interest in seeing how teachers from other cultures, and specifically Maya, taught in the classroom. In stark contrast to Maya's use of seemingly old-fashioned teaching tools, such as the blackboard, Katherine was very adept at using media via the class computer and video projector. In fact, she used PowerPoint slide shows more than she did in her daily English Language Center classes due to the difference in format and the focus on vocabulary learning. Interestingly, where Maya would use the blackboard to teach certain words or phrases, Katherine quite intuitively used a projected Microsoft Word file instead.

> Excerpt 58: I mean, what I like using during my English Language Center classes a lot if- *I don't usually use PowerPoints in my English Language Center classes because they're not lecture style*, so what I'll do with those classes is just type whatever my students are saying in a word doc and then have it projected on the screen. *I'm much faster at typing and it's obviously clearer.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

The contrast between Maya's and Katherine's familiarity with technology became quite apparent during the practicum. Katherine was clearly comfortable in this teaching environment,

no doubt due to a lifetime of experience as a student in a western culture, whereas for Maya it was a wholly new and different experience. Thus, Maya had to adjust not only her teaching but become comfortable with her physical surroundings as well. Katherine, on the other hand, was never pushed out of her "comfort zone," as Maya would put it.

Part 3 – The end of year one

For much of the first year I spent collecting data from Katherine, it was difficult for me to grasp Katherine's teacher identity development. It appeared that her teacher-self remained largely stable and that she only wanted to improve a few details, most of which were tied in with her management of the classroom. Thanks to the teaching experience she was able to gain during the first year (particularly as a teaching assistant), and paired with some of her classes (she was fondest of the teaching methods taught in ESL Methods), she appeared to successfully grow into the improved version of her teacher-self that she had initially set out to become.

In our final interview, Katherine explicitly referred to one important development in this first year. Because she was both a graduate student and teacher, she was constantly shifting between these two versions of her identity. One explicit marker for whether she was a graduate student or a teacher at a certain time was her dress and the type of bag she would carry on "teacher days" versus "student days." This led to an interesting encounter with her students when she did not switch to her teacher bag on one occasion.

> Excerpt 59: I was talking about the identity shift, and how *I made a conscious decision to, instead of carrying a backpack most of the days, when I would teach, I would carry a shoulder-, a work bag*. One day I had a backpack, because it was like, a Thursday, and I didn't switch my stuff over Wednesday, because

121

Wednesday is my student mode, when I don't teach at all. *One of my students is like, "Oh, so are you a student too?" And I was like, "Huh." I can't think of any other reason why they'd be asking me at. They pointed at my backpack, too.* […] *I [also] dressed completely differently. I think I carry myself differently*. (Interview 3)

While Katherine had expressed satisfaction with her improving classroom management skills in earlier interviews, in this last meeting with me she talked about how, during the second semester, she had faced more difficult situations in her ESL classrooms. She was quick to assure me that these problems were "nothing like what Rebecca went through" (Rebecca will be discussed in the next section); nevertheless, she had become much better at "not just being the friend" of her students, but also strict when necessary. As for her future plans, Katherine still wanted to teach ESL, but her experience throughout the year teaching in the Intensive English Program compared to the very advanced adult students in the practicum made her reconsider the teaching context she would prefer. At the end of year one, Katherine was much more interested in teaching highly motivated adults, such as the ones she met during the practicum.

With regards to the MA classes and their effect on her, Katherine largely repeated what she had said throughout the year at different times. A portion of the class content contributed to her teaching knowledge and development as a teacher (she particularly singled out ESL Methods and 'Pedagogical Grammar'), while some classes were almost entirely missing a "pedagogical angle." Like Natasha, she wished there were more classes with a strong pedagogical focus throughout the entire program. Her comment on the usefulness of the introduction class to SLA summed up her view quite succinctly: "Good to know, but I'm probably not going to use any of

it."

Katherine's present self at the beginning of the study and the future teacher-self she imagined for herself were very similar. Nevertheless, the improvement and changes she envisioned in year one did happen and quite rapidly so. For the most part, these changes were brought about by the teaching experience she was gaining day in and day out. Her status as a NS not only helped her in securing the assistantship as an ESL teacher, but in her MA classes it also brought with it the status of 'expert.' One time where she felt challenged and almost at a slight disadvantage was at the beginning of the class on 'Pedagogical Grammar' where NNSs, as can be expected, started out with more knowledge of English language rules. In summary, however, Katherine developed the skills she meant to develop and, overall, seemed very pleased with her first year in the program.

Rebecca

Part 1 – Fall semester (pre-practicum)

Not unlike Katherine, Rebecca took an indirect route toward English-language teaching, but hers was more accidental. Whereas Katherine had enjoyed her tutoring experience with Spanish speakers as well as her time as a study-abroad student in a Spanish-speaking country, Rebecca might never have come close to an ESL classroom if not for a chance encounter with a former classmate. This university student told Rebecca about teaching opportunities in Asia just as there was a hiring freeze for graduate assistants at her university. So, instead of continuing with graduate degrees in English or Sociology, Rebecca left the United States and has since focused on English teaching. Although the duration she had spent teaching prior to coming to the MA program was considerably longer than Katherine's, they both shared the common goal of

really learning to be a good teacher. Very much like Katherine, Rebecca felt unprepared for "serious" teaching in spite of her years of teaching in East Asia and her teaching certificate that she had received from a month-long teacher certification program in a southern-European country during a break from her teaching duties.

Rebecca's educational path was also different in that she struggled academically for a long time before eventually making the jump from a community college to a university. At both institutions, she worked at the respective writing centers, which seemed to stoke her interest in (written) language to some degree. As Rebecca and I discussed her journey that led her to becoming first an EFL teacher and now a TESOL graduate student, she opened up about her own struggles with two learning disabilities. She had been unaware of these disabilities until her mother told her about them in her early twenties. Until then Rebecca was certain that she had just been a bad, disinterested high school student. Since becoming aware of these learning disabilities, Rebecca had also become more conscious of the strategies she had developed and that had a profound effect on her views about herself as a teacher. To her, empathy and understanding were very important for successful teaching, and her own struggles, in her opinion, allowed her to be a better, more understanding teacher. In Excerpt 60, Rebecca reflects on finding out about her learning disabilities and how they and a strong interest in foreign cultures contribute to her seeing herself as a qualified teacher.

> Excerpt 60: *Because of my learning disability, I know how hard English is alone, so because I always find ways of trying to make things easier for myself to learn, or tricks or strategies* […] *I know how to do that with students*, which makes the language more accessible, I guess. […] That's [the learning disability] why I always thought I talked really slow […] and I thought I just hated school and not

124

because I had to work so much harder at it just because I was a teenager and most teenagers hate high school. […] *I guess the learning disability is a big part [of who I am as a teacher].* Then, I've traveled a lot more than I guess the average American, so I think that plays a part as well, and *going from being such a bad student to being such a good student. I understand and I sympathize with my not-so-strong students. Like, my whole life plays a part in who I am, how I teach.* (Interview 1)

Quite obviously, Rebecca was looking forward to becoming a *real* teacher; she often mentioned how the teaching she had done in East Asia had had many flaws, such as the strong focus on students' test results rather than actual language learning. While having this experience was definitely valuable, Rebecca was nevertheless worried about the challenges of being a student once again after five years of traveling the world, teaching, and generally enjoying life. Rebecca predicted a lot of stress from attempting to find a healthy balance between *work and play* in graduate school as well as dealing with the fact that her teaching and overall performance as a student will be open to criticism.

> Excerpt 61: *I think I'm going to be crying a lot.* […] *I think it's everything, teaching and studying. I've been out of school for five years now* and I'm so used to doing my work during the week, and during the weekend, traveling and having fun and having my own time, and that's not going to happen anymore. *Trying to find a balance within that and also being put under a microscope for everything that I do when I teach, and knowing that a majority of it's going to be wrong and that I have a lot to learn. It's hard. No one wants to be told that.* (Interview 1)

Aside from becoming an expert ESL teacher, Rebecca described herself as "romanticized by the idea" of becoming in expert in something writing-related. When we met for our first interview early in her first semester, Rebecca had already decided to pursue a written Master's thesis (which is optional) at the end of her time in the program. While she was concerned with becoming a better classroom instructor, she also wanted to have profound academic knowledge about at least one domain (writing, which was her passion). Her reasoning for this is laid out in Excerpt 62.

> Excerpt 62: I really don't think I want a Ph.D., but *I want my focus for teaching to be on writing*. I would like maybe one day to have a writing center, be part of a writing center, something like that. I'm just so interested in the writing process, so for me to have writing as a specialty and not write a thesis, I think, would be kind of silly. *I want the experience. I want to know what that means to write a thesis. I want to understand it. I want to go through that experience because I think it would be helpful for me as a teacher, with my students and everything.* […] I think I am romanticized by the idea of it, but *I also want to be an expert in something and be like, "Oh, well, I studied that, and this is what happened," and know what the hell I'm talking about when I'm teaching*. You know what I mean? Like *when I'm teaching this and we do 'this', that's because … I feel like it could be stronger, more so than writing lesson plans or book reviews*. (Interview 1)

As the first semester unfolded, there were some interesting parallels between how Katherine and Rebecca answered their journal prompts. Rebecca also was quite fond of working with NNSs "because I've never taught really advanced students before like the ones in our class

126

and they ask really thoughtful questions." (Journal 1) As far as what she was learning from ESL

Methods, Rebecca's answer also focused on learnable skills, such as "[learning] what truly

makes a communicative activity, authentic materials, writing objectives, language focused lesson

plans, top-down and bottom-up activities, and more definitions to TESOL jargon." (Journal 2)

Rebecca attributed her self-assessed improvement as a teacher (during the first semester)

to a variety of people and activities, such as her classmates, professors, workshops, observing

experienced teachers, and "most of all" working with her own students on an almost daily basis.

In fact, she consciously tried to challenge herself and apply what she was learning in her MA

classes in practice, even though on certain days she did not feel particularly capable as a teacher.

> Excerpt 63: *I have been taking a magnifying glass to my own teaching methods to*
>
> *see what works and what doesn't.* Whenever I have an assignment or activity for
>
> my M.A. classes*, I'm always trying to do a new activity to challenge myself and*
>
> *apply it to the theory I have been learning. Some days I don't feel like a good*
>
> *teacher*, but I think even Mozart had his bad days. (Journal 1)

Rebecca's great motivation, which she stressed again in one of her journal entries, was to

grow as a teacher or, more precisely, become a real teacher for the first time. In response to my

prompt about whether she expected her teaching style to change, she quite directly dismissed the

teaching she had done in Asia as easy and somewhat inconsequential. This was not an indictment

of her work but rather the type of standardized teaching common in many East Asian countries

where minimally trained NSs can find work as teachers or teaching assistants without greater

problems. In Excerpt 64, Rebecca describes what her life was like in her four years abroad and

the changes she was hoping to make for herself by way of the MA program.

Excerpt 64: [Question: Will your teaching style change?] I hope so. *That's why I am here.* [In East Asia], it's super easy to teach, make money, travel, party, and not take anything seriously. *I came to grad school because I want to learn how to be a better teacher.* I want to be challenged to see what I can do to help my students to learn English better so they can achieve their own goals (learning a new language, getting a better job, getting a foreign girlfriend). *Also, I would like to do research while at MSU so I can add to the literature and make TESOL a better field for better teachers.* (Journal 1)

While the fall semester had run smoothly for Rebecca in terms of her classwork and her teaching duties, the practicum semester was off to a bumpy start. In Interview 2, only a few weeks into the new semester, Rebecca vented about a number of problems that had come up and were constantly on her mind. Rebecca and the other three participants in this study were all in the same cohort and taking the same classes. This and, probably, the fact that they were all in the study had made them a tight-knit group. When the other three were chosen as university representatives in TESOL at the largest international TESOL conference for this and the following year, Rebecca was understandably stunned. In the absence of a comforting explanation, Rebecca began to harbor doubts about how she was perceived by her supervisors and other faculty. As she recounted how she felt in the days after finding out that her friends had been selected, while she had been passed over, she said: "*I thought that I had done something wrong, and that I wasn't a good enough teacher, and I wasn't a good enough person, I wasn't a good enough student.*" (Interview 2) These self-doubts stood in sharp contrast to Rebecca's first semester when, from what I observed, everything had gone to plan. She had found a good

128

balance between school work and her private life, and she had enjoyed teaching her classes and was making progress as a teacher.

As it turned out, Rebecca also had significant problems with one of her ESL classes in the second semester. After the first two weeks, some classes were consolidated and students moved around between sections, which left Rebecca with an almost entirely new set of students. Significantly, her class was made up of students from six different countries, quite in contrast to the almost entirely Chinese class populations she had had in the previous semester. Additionally, Rebecca was, for the first time, teaching what other teachers told her was the most difficult and preparation-intensive class in the Intensive English Program, Upper-Intermediate Writing/Content. Excerpt 65 demonstrates Rebecca's emotional response to the immediate and continuous problems with her students during the beginning weeks of the term and, most importantly, how these problems made her act like the sort of teacher she did not envision herself to be.

> Excerpt 65: *It was very overwhelming, and confusing, and crazy, but I was still positive*, like, "Oh, it's going to be okay." *Then I've just had problems with my students ever since then*. I've been *trying to figure out what those problems are, and how to negotiate them, and how to fix it*, *and how to get to a point where I'm not dreading going to class*, and hoping that students don't feel the same way because that's not the kind of teacher I am. (Interview 2)

Rebecca went on to talk about one lesson in particular that went awry. This example is very insightful because Rebecca was attempting to channel her old teacher-self by relying on the kind of teaching she used to do in as an EFL teacher in East Asia. Valentine's Day was coming

129

up and Rebecca tried to entice (or "bribe"; Rebecca's word) her students by promising a culture-focused lesson with gifts and fun games if they behaved well (i.e., come on time, do their homework, etc.). Her attempts to rely on this strategy that had worked in the East Asian context backfired when the students did none of what she had asked of them. This was particularly frustrating for Rebecca because it, again, forced her to act like the sort of teacher she did not have in mind for herself. She wanted there to be joy and fun in her class alongside the serious work. The immaturity of her students, at least in this particular class, however, made this impossible.

> Excerpt 66: [I told them:] 'You guys can do that stuff [come to class on time, do homework, be respectful, participate in class] and we will celebrate Valentine's day. If not, then we'll just do normal stuff.' *In [East Asia], that totally works. You can bribe students that way. Here, students didn't come to class on time, they didn't do their homework, they didn't do anything.* I had bought them the candy hearts, and I bought them little Valentine's day gifts, *because it's my personality. It's just, it's who I am.* I created this whole lesson about writing Valentine's Day cards and all this stuff, and yet, *I can't deliver those lessons because they're not being good and I'm not going to reward that type of behavior.* (Interview 2)

Eventually, she abandoned her ideas for a fun lesson and, instead, asked her students to complete a semi-formal writing exercise in which they had to write short Valentine's card messages. However, even this was met with criticism. To add insult to injury, the criticism came from a female East Asian student, the population she had a fair amount of previous experience with. Excerpt 67 aptly demonstrates Rebecca's frustration at this point.

Excerpt 67: [Just as I was telling them to get started], *[t]he one [East Asian] girl is like, 'What's the purpose of doing this activity?'* [I'm] sorry. I'm trying so hard here to throw you guys a bone, and show you about this holiday and do something that's fun and creative, but also still focusing on form and meaning and all of that great stuff. *Then it's just, like, you're really questioning my methodology. It's just, I can't win with them.* (Interview 2)

Rebecca spent a large part of our second interview venting about the different problems she had with this group of students. Principally, she blamed these problems on how the class had been put together after the semester had already started with some of the students probably being not quite at the proficiency level they should be. Nevertheless, she was also challenged in a rather personal manner by some of her male Middle Eastern students who were disrespectful and even aggressive toward her. Rebecca thought that this was not simply a cultural issue of her, a young female, teaching males from a male-centric culture. (She had had no problems with male Saudi students in the previous semester.) Rather, she blamed the fact that most of her students had been taking classes in the Intensive English Program for a number of semesters (and thus being only provisionally admitted as university students) along with the difficulty level of this particular class. The mix of nationalities in the class further contributed to the problems. Rebecca had, at first been excited about the prospect of numerous cultures in the same classroom after one group in the previous semester had consisted of only Chinese students. Now, however, students took offense in confusing and odd ways. For example, while Saudi students complained about her treating them like children, an Asian student said she was too harsh and should smile more.

With everything that was going on in her problematic classroom, Rebecca's ideas about

what makes a successful teacher were in flux. Where previously she had stressed that a good

teacher was "organized, well prepared, enthusiastic, passionate, confident but also

understanding" (Interview 1), she was now primarily concerned with keeping her students in

check and classes going.

> Excerpt 68: *Right now I feel successful teaching is just classroom management.*
> *No matter what material you have to teach, or how passionate you are about it,*
> *it's being able to handle the students* in such a way that, controlling them and then
> having a good balance between classwork and homework and expectations and
> projects of both input and output. *Right now, that's where I'm at considering my*
> *struggle*. (Interview 2)

While Rebecca understandably had a lot to say about the impact of her teaching and its

frustrations, she was also irritated with some aspects of her MA classes. As was the case with all

of the participants, ESL Methods was the class that Rebecca considered the best and most useful.

However, Rebecca was quite outspoken about how the theories discussed in other MA classes

often seemed disconnected from real-life language classrooms. This discontent ran quite deep;

Rebecca felt that she had been misled by the program's website which, according to her, made it

sound as if the program was much more pedagogically oriented that it turned out to be. Excerpt

69 summarizes Rebecca's thoughts on the matter, concluding that the disconnect between theory

and practice at times seems as great to her as if she were studying one thing and teaching

another.

> Excerpt 69: I just feel like ... *according to the [MATESOL] program website, the*
> *first thing when you go to that's on there is like, we are pedagogically based and*

we have some theory but it's more pedagogy and that's it. That's what I came here

for. That's why I chose to do this and not the linguistics program. *I didn't expect*

classes like this. I just feel like I'm suffering in my class right now. *I feel like I put*

so much time and effort into teaching, and so much time and effort into being a

student and except for ['ESL Classroom Practice' and 'Teaching Second

Language Reading and Writing'], they are not coming together. It just takes me

so much time to put effort into both. […] *I might as well be studying Sociology,*

and then I might as well be teaching Math because they just have nothing to do

with each other. (Interview 2)

Nevertheless, Rebecca felt like she was learning a lot about teaching and being a

language teaching professional. However, unlike what her original expectation was (i.e., that she

would become a teacher mostly through what she would learn in the classes she took), the so-

called skill meetings she had to attend as part of her teaching assignment played the biggest role.

(For each language skill or skills that classes focus on, e.g., speaking/listening or writing/content,

teachers would meet in a group with an assigned skill coordinators once a week.) These types of

reflections and discussions with other teachers were something that had been missing during

Rebecca's years of teaching EFL. In Excerpt 70, she describes teaching as "a locked box of

information." Interacting and collaborating with other, often more experienced, teachers allowed

her some insights into this "locked box" of teaching that she was not receiving from much of her

own MA classwork.

Excerpt 70: Every week we have skills meeting. *Just to sit down with the*

coordinators and then the other teachers who are teaching in the classes and me.

It was really nice because last semester it was me and [a second-year MA student and ESL TA]. This semester I'm the only TA. […] *Just to sit there and talk about it to get ideas and just see what other people are doing. I feel like so much of teaching is* […] *like a locked of box of information*, and to open up that box and see what other people are doing and what's going on and how that compares is really helpful. […] *In [East Asia], I was teaching and teaching. I've had friends and staff I would talk to but it's never like we would sit down and discuss it.* (Interview 2)

When I asked about her views on the pairing of NSs and NNSs, which was common in ESL Methods and most other classes, Rebecca offered a similar view as Katherine. She, too, enjoyed having very advanced students to practice her material on although she thought that, overall, the pairing was probably supposed to benefit the NNSs more than the NSs. At that time in the interview, Rebecca also commented on the different confidence levels she had observed among NNS teachers in the course of the first semester and particularly in ESL Methods. For one classroom exercise early in the semester, each of the foreign students taught a short ten-minute lesson in their own first language (the majority of MA students were actually NNSs; the few NSs either taught a second language they spoke or assisted the NNSs during their teaching demonstration). This was the only in-class exercise where the target language was not English. Rebecca revealed that she found that the NNSs (of English) were never as comfortable and confident in teaching demonstrations as during that very first one when they had the NS advantage ("The confidence that they had doing that [teaching in their first language] and then that kind of lack of confidence now [teaching English], it's just day and night.") In Excerpt 71,

Rebecca how teaching advanced NNSs was beneficial to her confidence after she had mostly taught low-proficiency students prior to starting in the MA program.

> Excerpt 71: *For non-natives maybe it's[the pairing up] to their benefit more*, but for us that's going to be our students. You know what I mean*? If I can teach Maya and Natasha then I can teach anyone.* […] *It makes me feel more confident*, and maybe that's because in [East Asia] I just taught low level. […] I feel I lack confidence in teaching high level, but I feel if I can teach Maya, I can teach anyone. *It makes me feel good.* (Interview 2)

Rebecca added to that how NSs had been valued so much higher during her time teaching EFL and that seeing skillful NNS teachers, particularly Maya, had helped her realize that NNS teachers are not necessarily disadvantaged at all. In fact, Rebecca admitted that she used to feel bad for NNS teachers "when they made mistakes and their accents were hard to understand" but was beginning to think that "they [NNSs] may have more to offer to our students than us [NSs]" thanks to their understanding of grammar and ability to serve as role models to the students.

Looking toward the future at that particular moment in time, Rebecca was very much looking forward to the practicum experience. She was hoping to be revitalized by the practicum after the daily routine of frequently problematic students had worn her down. The student population was wildly different from the one that made up her regular intensive ESL classrooms. Thus, Rebecca's hope was that teaching in the practicum would be more relaxing and in line with who she wanted to be as a teacher, in other words, her ideal teacher-self. The nickname given to her by her current students was "the dictator" and, understandably, she was very eager for a more positive classroom experience that would bring her closer to the identity goal she had

set for herself as a teacher at the beginning of the program.

Part 2 - The practicum semester

It became apparent very quickly that the practicum class indeed fit Rebecca's teaching personality much better than what she had reported from her experiences teaching in the university's Intensive English Program. Her (and Maya's) students were not only quite advanced (proficiency level 4 out of 5) but highly self-motivated. In addition, the class focus was on conversation and cultural topics, areas in which Rebecca had previously identified her strengths to be. Furthermore, the absence of any assessment or external (i.e., institutional) pressure allowed Rebecca to relax into her preferred role as teacher *and* friend to her students. Each teacher was observed by the practicum supervisor either three or four times, but Rebecca was used to visits to her ESL classrooms which were more intimidating due to the stakes involved. In fact, one of the few minor complaints that Rebecca had about the way the practicum unfolded was the limited and always entirely positive feedback she received after her classes had been observed. She felt that rather than stimulating her growth as a teacher it was holding her back. Rebecca opined that this positive feedback might be helpful for less experienced teachers, but for herself she would rather receive pointers on what she might improve.

> Excerpt 72: *Maybe that's [positive feedback] to build the confidence of the people who don't have a lot of teaching experience.* […] So, to get up there and give a lesson and be like, 'Oh, yeah, it's good,' and then to have that confidence. *I don't need that confidence. I need to know what I need to do better*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

136

Along with that criticism, Rebecca also re-visited her discontent with her MA classes when she stated: "I've said this a hundred times: What I do in [classes like Introduction to Second Language Acquisition] doesn't have a lot to do with what I'm actually doing, the practical part of it. I know how to make a pretty, fun lesson, but I want to make it *better*." (Stimulated Verbal Report 1) For her practicum classes, she relied on the lesson planning that she and Maya, as her teaching partner, had done during the first semester in 'ESL Methods.' The classes she was taking during the second semester, concurrently with the practicum, however, appeared to increasingly irritate her with their lack of focus on pedagogy.

As she watched herself teach one of her first practicum classes on video, Rebecca explicitly talked about two separate teaching selves, one in the Intensive English Program and one in the practicum. In Excerpt 73, she refers to these two separate selves as *English Language Center Rebecca* and *Practicum Rebecca*; at the same time, she makes mention of how her own stress levels negatively affected her students in the intensive English classes. In contrast, teaching in the practicum was more of a "vacation" (a word she would use later in Stimulated Verbal Report 3).

> Excerpt 73: *Teacher Rebecca practicum is much happier and non-dictator like, as compared to Rebecca with the English Language Center*. There's no objectives, other than getting them to talk, and improving their confidence, and teaching them some vocabulary, maybe a little bit of grammar, and that's it. *The English Language Center, there's so much more at stake, and that makes me stressed out. The students are stressed out, and the students are really angry. Here, the students are much happier in the practicum*. (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

At this point, she openly wondered whether her attitude as a teacher in the Intensive

English Program was inappropriately serious before concluding that it was not. In her opinion,

some of the other teachers, however, took the teaching in that program too lightly because there a

lot was at stake for the students (unlike in the practicum). By reflecting on that situation and the

differences between the two types of classes, she realized that some of the problems she

encountered with her students were not because of her personality, but due to the students'

expectations after they had moved through the less-demanding lower levels in the Intensive

English Program.

> Excerpt 74: *Maybe I'm taking myself too seriously when I teach at the English*
> *Language Center, but I feel like it's a serious situation.* That's a lot of their
> money, and their time here is being invested in that. *I don't' want to take that*
> *lightly.* I feel like some of the English Language Center teachers do take that
> lightly and teach like they would do a practicum here. *I think it does such a great*
> *disservice, not only to the students, because they think that they can go into*
> *classes, and it's going to be songs and hugs and rainbows.* Then they get to my
> class, and they're like, 'What the [expletive]?' […] They think that it's going to be
> songs and lollipops, whatever. No, that's not university. This is go time, and it's
> serious time. Especially with writing, which is really hard for students, which is
> what I teach. *I think […] this semester, some of the push back has been, 'What do*
> *you mean, this isn't fun time? This is English Language Center. It should be fun.'*
> (Stimulated Verbal Report 1)

Rebecca's written video reflection about halfway through the practicum revealed some

interesting insights into some underlying aspects of her personality that may explain what, albeit subconsciously, had drawn her to English teaching as a profession. As I detailed earlier, the choice to become a teacher was more or less accidental (or serendipitous) for Rebecca. Watching the video of herself teaching in private (i.e., undisturbed by my presence and occasional questioning) led Rebecca to disclose that, in some way, teaching was a version of her childhood dream of becoming an actress. Rebecca's language here is very telling in that she describes her teaching self as both a "performance" and a "role" that she plays. She stressed that being a teacher was only part of her identity when she referred to getting on the stage "no matter what has happened" that day.

> Excerpt 75: When I was a little girl, I wanted to be an actress. I tried auditioning for plays and I even joined the forensics club, but I was really bad at acting. *As a teacher, I feel as though I am fulfilling my childhood dream of acting. I am on a stage (classroom), with my prepared script (lesson plan) and I perform for my audience (students). No matter what has happened in my day or in my personal life, I have to get up on stage and pretend as though everything is ok. I perform my role as teacher* with the hopes that my students will learn something new and increase their English skills, even if it is only a little bit. *Being videotaped makes this all seem even more like a performance.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 2)

By the time Rebecca and I met for her final stimulated verbal report, it became clear that the practicum experience had had a real influence on Rebecca. Beyond how much she enjoyed teaching and helping mature adult students, it also made her think about her future. Although she conceded that she would still need to teach more and improve as a teacher, she was thinking

about one day training future teachers, and she had made plans to move in that direction during the second year of her MA. She had found out that, most times but not this semester, the practicum supervisor had an assistant who also observes classes and that this would be an option for her the following year.

> Excerpt 76: So I think it'll be really good, and I think it's really important. *I'm kind of getting to this point in my career where I have been teaching for a while, and it's time for me to start thinking more about how I would help to train other teachers*. Not to say, like, I still don't need, like tons more experience, but that's just a nice little opportunity. (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

Her negative views of some of the MA classes had in the meantime only solidified. In comparison to Natasha, Rebecca did not go as far as calling communicative grammar-based activities "a waste of time". She did, however, agree that it was very difficult to come up with these activities on an everyday basis. ("I want to know how to teach grammar communicatively. […] It's so hard. Like, it's hard to come up with *authentic* communicative activities.") Rebecca was much more irritated with the vague theoretical approaches in her MA classes and how any of it may translate to the actual classroom. While she was very happy with her instructor in ESL Methods who Rebecca described as "equally research and teaching-oriented" and "the perfect combination of teacher and researcher", she was confused as to "what motivates [some professors] to do research in this field specifically […] because we're teachers and *you would think that teachers doing research on teachers would be a little bit more passionate about it*." (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

The biggest sticking point for Rebecca, which goes back to her choosing this MA

140

program because of its supposed focus on pedagogy, was the amount of ambiguity she encountered in her classes when what she wanted most were clear answers to the question of how to teach (structures, skills, etc.) successfully. Instead, she was faced with vagueness and research into SLA that were more nebulous than enlightening. Excerpt 77 summarizes how her expectations and hopes oftentimes did not match up with the content in her MA classes.

Excerpt 77: I'm okay with ambiguity, but like *every time I ask a question, I can't have ambiguity*. I want to know how I can take this good activity and prime it in a way so I can teach the students and have them use meaningful language. Sometimes, I need an answer. […] *Well, I mean, I feel like that's the problem with this research. SLA is so complex, and then it's so vague. I came to grad school because I want to know. [I]f we're supposed to do communicative activities and that's the best way, then let me do that.* Give me all the activities. […]. I'm not sure. And that's what's hard because *there are no easy kinds of answers, so I get frustrated sometimes*. And that's what deters me from doing research because I just don't want to go in and be like, 'Well, watching TV is good.' […] Because I feel like, yeah*, if I were to train teachers in the future, I want to be confident in what I can help them with so they can teach better and be more effective and help our learners to learn more.* (Stimulated Verbal Report 3)

In spite of the perceived shortcomings of most of her MA classes, Rebecca's comfort levels in the classroom continued to grow. The situation in her problematic ESL classroom had improved as the semester was coming to an end. Her practicum assignment, which she had earlier hoped would revitalize her, had indeed done exactly that. Once Rebecca had had a couple

of classes with her practicum students without being observed by the supervisor, she had become very comfortable. The practicum class was quite obviously more in accordance with how Rebecca saw herself as a teacher, i.e. instead of the serious grade-oriented teaching in the Intensive English Program, she could work with the students in a relaxed, low-pressure atmosphere.

A note on observations. Similarly to Katherine, Rebecca also quickly became comfortable teaching in the practicum; undoubtedly, both were helped by the fact that they were constantly teaching their own ("serious") classes, including on practicum days. (The practicum classes were on Tuesday and Thursday nights; the intensive ESL classes had class meetings every day but Wednesday.) For the NNS participants, Maya and Natasha, on the other hand, this presented the only teaching they would do each week and, indeed, in their entire time in the program. This explains why my observations gave me much less insight regarding both the NSs' developments. They both taught confidently, without easily observable ups or downs, for the entire duration of the practicum. The more interesting findings came when Katherine and Rebecca shared their 'mental lives' in our various meetings.

Part 3 – The end of year one

In our concluding interview, Rebecca did not hesitate to once again praise how much the experience as an ESL teacher in the English Language Center had done for her. Here, she was not just referring to the work in the classroom, but everything that came with being a teaching assistant, such as meetings with experienced teachers and class observations of those same teachers. She also mentioned the perks of being an MA student, such as informal so-called

brown bag presentations, which were frequently pedagogy-related. Excerpt 78 has an interesting moment from the final interview where Rebecca paused to think "what else" had helped her. I was surprised when she did not mention any of her MA class work at this juncture but instead talked more about collaborating with other students.

> Excerpt 78: *The biggest impact would be teaching at the English Language Center and just having the experience with the students and kind of doing that and all the brown bags and stuff that were involved with that*; just gave me so much more practical teaching ideas while I was studying the theory. And then, yeah, *there's that and then what else?* Hanging out with other students and just like learning from them and talking to them about stuff. *I feel like I learn more from other teachers and other students that way. So, yeah, the English Language Center is the most important and I was grateful to have the opportunity to be able to teach while studying*. (Interview 3)

I asked Rebecca to put herself in the shoes of her NNS friends for whom their only teaching experience as part of the MA is the six-week teaching practicum. Rebecca responded that she could not imagine only teaching in the practicum because there was just so much that she learned from her teaching assignment. In fact, she said that she had wondered what the others "got out of [the practicum]." (Katherine and Rebecca were the only NSs among the ten practicum teachers that semester and also the only two with concurrent ESL teaching assistantships.)

Although Rebecca was clearly making strides as a teacher and had learned how to be a better teacher (although for the most part from practice rather than her classes), she had similar

doubts, which I also saw in Natasha, regarding her future as a teacher. Whereas Natasha had wavered partly because of the criticism she faced and her feeling of inadequacy in her new context, Rebecca was disillusioned because of how complicated the idea of teaching had become. In Excerpt 79 she describes it as knowing less than when she started.

Excerpt 79: I think that language teaching is even more complex than I knew before coming to the program and now *I feel like maybe I know less than when I started and I am just more aware of the complexities of it.* I've learned a lot but it is so complicated and […] *this is the only field that you would have a discipline that's so intertwined with teaching methods and pedagogy*, like, *you wouldn't do that for like anthropology or sociology where you just pass on knowledge that you have*. (Interview 3)

Teaching to her was something much simpler until she had begun studying it formally. She summarized the frustration with the content of many MA classes as follows:" […] there are so many times when *there are such unclear answers to questions and that usually just lead us to asking more questions and more unsolved answers and just trying to figure it out for ourselves*." (Interview 3)

On a personal level, Rebecca seemed proud of at least one development of which she had become aware. Earlier she had described herself as too much of a perfectionist, in her roles of a student and a teacher, which in turn would lead to her being too demanding and, eventually frustrated. This critical view of herself had made way for a more understanding approach in which being less-than-perfect did not equal laziness.

Excerpt 80: I feel like I'm a little less critical of myself, that *I have such high*

144

expectations on myself as a teacher and not that I'm like being lazy or something

which is kind of having more confidence that even though things don't go

perfectly, I am still doing a good job. (Interview 3)

In thinking about her identity, Rebecca recognized that the ground work for her interest in the field of teaching, and particularly language teaching, might have been laid by her previous educational path. Although her first foray into English teaching had come about by accident, as I discussed earlier, she made the connection between her previous academic as well as general interests and the profession she had chosen (for now at least).

Excerpt 81: I feel like I understand more now why I'm teaching English because I was an English Major undergrad with a Minor in Sociology. So *I was always interested in reading about culture and talking about culture and sociological issues.* […] So I'm here and *I kind of realized that teaching English is a nice marriage between English Lit and Sociology in some aspects*; of course like not teaching grammar but like that *you can have like a themed class that deals with really good issues and talks about things and get students thinking.*[…] I like talking to people. I like learning about their lives and where they come from and […] I just want to keep communicating with them. *So, I feel like that part hasn't changed but it just become more solidified through this year*. (Interview 3)

Similarly, she made reference to something I had said to her earlier during her crisis with her ESL students. Having gotten to know Rebecca over the span of a year, I found that classes like the practicum with their focus on culture and themes were much better aligned with her

145

personality and what she valued in interactions with people. In Excerpt 82, she agrees with that statement in hindsight, and she also references the amount of stress she had felt when she was forced to play the role of a strict teacher.

> Excerpt 82: No, I think I'm still the same as I was but I kind of think a lot about what you said before that. *Maybe I'm not so much of an academic-ey teacher as I am like just kind of a fun conversational teacher, I think you may be right. Because I noticed that like when I have all these like pressures from English Language Center to like get the students to move up to the next level like I take that so seriously and take that to heart.*[…] And I think that they [the ESL students] kind of hate me but I take them from point A to point B. So I never really had that much stress in [East Asia] in teaching that I feel like I have here at the English Language Center. (Interview 3)

Finally, Rebecca reflected on her journey thus far with mixed feelings. On the one hand, she felt like the beauty of teaching is often lost in the "nitty-gritty" of teaching and, even more so, a theoretical approach toward it. On the other hand, thanks to her career in teaching and the fact that she was born in an English-speaking country (which she described as very fortunate), she had been able to make connections with people she otherwise would never been able to meet.

> Excerpt 83: *I'm trying hard to not get disillusioned. I think when you just get so deep into theory of it and the nitty-gritty of it that anything doesn't look pretty anymore.* But to be able to like be best friends with someone like Maya is like life changing. Because of where she comes from and where I come from. And we are just like totally opposite ends of the world but we could be the best friends. *And I*

have that opportunity because I'm a white girl from [city in United States] who

has her name luckily on the right passport and just happen to live in the right

country where I can speak a language that I can talk to her and share stories

about our lives and develop a friendship that will last for the rest of our lives.

(Interview 3)

A summary of Rebecca's and Katherine's trajectories and a comparison of the four

participants' teacher-self development

Because there were more similarities between the two NESTs than among the NNESTs, I

will use this section to summarize the NEST-specific findings while also including the NNESTs

in a cross-comparison between both speaker groups and among all four participants.

Rebecca and Katherine entered the MATESOL program with very similar expectations.

Both had gained teaching experience in an EFL context and were eager to become *real* teachers.

Although Rebecca had previously taught considerably more than Katherine (about four years

compared to six months), there was agreement among them that teaching abroad as an untrained

NS was not comparable to the serious teaching of various linguistic skills that they would

encounter in a U.S. university context.

Both NESTs stressed the importance of their teaching assignments in the Intensive

English Program for their development of particular classroom skills and their growth as

teaching professionals. In fact, at different times they credited the teaching assignment as crucial

for this positive development of their teacher selves; in contrast, their assessment of the

usefulness of a number of MA classes during this first year was often negative. The common

criticism was the lack of pedagogical applicability for much of the content in certain classes

(e.g., Introduction to Second Language Acquisition). Rebecca was the more outspoken of the two as she grew increasingly frustrated with the lack of a clear link between theory and practice. Katherine's attitude was more forgiving, likely because the experience and practice the ESL teaching assignment afforded her helped her create the teacher-self she had aimed for: that of a more competent ESL teacher. On the other hand, Rebecca expressed disappointment that the program was not as pedagogically oriented as advertised.

Unsurprisingly, neither Rebecca nor Katherine went through any academic culture shock the way the two NNESTs did. They knew what was expected of them and this too made the changes during the year appear more subtle. Although they did not have the academic credentials of either Natasha or Maya (both of whom already had MA degrees), they were at an advantage as soon as the program began. That is not to say that there were no challenges for the NESTs; Rebecca in particular spoke about classroom issues throughout the second semester. However, Rebecca's struggles in the Intensive English Program, while creating a challenge, were ultimately positive for her development as a teacher. She received practice managing difficult classroom situations and the stress of teaching in this high-stakes environment helped her realize that she would prefer working in a different teaching context in the future. Natasha, in contrast, was never able to resolve her classroom management issues and was, in the end, left frustrated by the lack of preparation for such situations as well as the lack of real-life practice due to the short duration of the practicum. Playing these dual roles of student and teacher did have some drawbacks for the NESTs, as Katherine pointed out. There was simply not enough time to implement what she had learned from pedagogy-focused classes, such as ESL Methods, in her teaching practice. She was looking forward to having more time to lesson plan and focus on being solely a teacher, a sentiment that Rebecca echoed.

While the NS/NNS issue was constantly at the forefront of Natasha's mind, the NESTs, expectedly, were less concerned. There was, however, Rebecca's interesting realization near the end of the practicum that NNESTs might have more to offer students than NESTs do. Previously, she had felt bad for NNESTs when they made mistakes or pronounced words incorrectly (or in a non-native way). Not least because she worked with a very experienced NNEST in Maya, Rebecca over time valued different aspects of the NNESTs' teaching beyond their mere language proficiency. Both Rebecca and Katherine enjoyed running by their English-teaching materials with their NNEST colleagues. Although they did not directly state why they enjoyed this, I can surmise reasons. Both Rebecca and Katherine mentioned more than once that receiving approval from their very advanced English-speaking colleagues (the NNESTs) during teaching demonstrations increased their confidence tremendously. It seems they viewed the NNESTs as expert learners well informed in pedagogy and SLA, so in a sense, the NNESTs were, in the native-speaking teachers' minds, best positioned to give *seals of approval* on newly created teaching materials.

As far as their changing teacher selves are concerned, Rebecca was more reflective and outspoken about her self-development among the NESTs. For example, she talked about how her own experience with learning disabilities increased her understanding of the pressures students deal with in the classroom. Rebecca was also open with her struggle between the teacher she would like to be (fun, friendly) and the teacher she had to be in the Intensive English Program (serious). This led to her slightly adjusting her career plans to perhaps finding work in a context different from intensive English programs in U.S. universities.

Katherine's main concern was to learn new teaching skills and/or improve on her existing skills. She did so very quickly and mainly through her teaching assignment, which included

149

constant classroom practice in the Intensive English Program and frequent meetings with and observations of senior faculty in the English Language Center. Like Rebecca, Katherine also reconsiders her ideas about working in an Intensive English Program in the future. Her reconsideration, however, was solely due to the immaturity of the students she had encountered, rather than the type of teacher she wanted herself to be (as in Rebecca's case).

In these previous two chapters I compiled chronological narratives for each individual teacher. The differences in their self-developmental paths showed that the amount and kind of teaching practice available to each teacher had a significant impact on the teachers' developing selves. As such, the experience for the NESTs and NNESTs was different from the start. Nevertheless, probably the most distinctive variables were each teacher's initial teacher-self when they began the program and the self they hoped to create. Both Rebecca and Katherine came into the program considering themselves untrained EFL teachers who wanted to become real teachers. For both that meant that they had to learn to teach in the Intensive English Program while also studying up on the theories and tools of teaching. Neither, however, thought beyond the ESL classroom the way the NNESTs had to because they had previously studied and taught in less communicative settings. To a certain extent, the NESTs, in spite of their previous EFL experience, came into the MATESOL program with unestablished teacher selves. Their time teaching EFL, even though for Rebecca that was four years, was considered somewhat trivial and lacking in seriousness. This view of their own experience was affected by Rebecca and Katherine's awareness that "it is easier for untrained NSs to be hired to teach ESL/EFL than trained and experienced nonnative English teachers"(Wong, 2009, p. 123). Having this particular experience, in other words, said little about their quality as teachers, but only that they grew up in a place where English is spoken. While they did not enter the MATESOL program as blank

slates, they had very little about teaching to unlearn and were very open to creating a 'real' teacher-self for the first time.

Maya and Natasha, on the other hand, came in with well-established, if very different, teacher selves. As I discussed at the end of chapter 4, Maya was able to add a dimension to her initial teacher-self, whereas Natasha's teacher-self seemed to disappear as she became stuck between a past and potential future teacher-self with which she did not agree. In comparison, both NNESTs' selves developed less and showed only minor changes. As Maya said, to develop and improve as a teacher one must leave one's own comfort zone. It appeared that Natasha was not as willing to do so and that neither Rebecca nor Katherine were forced out of their comfort zones in the MA classes or the ESL classes. These classes were challenging at times, as discussed earlier, but the positives of having an opportunity to put new skills and knowledge into practice clearly outweighed the negatives (such as the stress of constantly playing the dual role of teacher and student). Most importantly, the context played an important role. Rebecca and Katherine immediately felt comfortable in both the U.S. university context as well as the ESL context when they taught. Maya and Natasha, in contrast, had to adjust to the new context inside and outside of the (MA and practicum) classrooms. Here, their divergent personalities and home cultures appeared to affect their levels of effort and success in doing so (see chapter 4). In conclusion, the teacher-self-development for the NNESTs was multidimensional and unpredictable while the NESTs' development seemed minor and less complex in comparison. Clearly, neither the NESTs' nor the NNESTs' experience should or can be entirely generalized. Nevertheless, I will consider the different types of MATESOL experiences the participants had in the next chapter when I discuss possible implications for teacher-self-development within TESOL preparation programs.

151

CHAPTER 6

FURTHER DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this final chapter I link the findings to previous research and discuss them further in relation to the participants' MATESOL experience during their first year. From there I continue by discussing implications for language teacher preparation. I conclude with a section on the study's limitations and an outline of desirable future research that may build on the present study and lead to further advances in language teacher education.

Discussion of findings in relation to prior research and the MATESOL curriculum

The discussion of teachers' development within a teacher-preparation program, such as this MATESOL program, needs to begin with the expectations each teacher brought with them. It has frequently been argued that the idea of the teacher educator as the *provider of knowledge,* who bestows upon future teachers the gift of teaching, is simplistic and unrealistic (Cross, 2010; Mann, 2005; Varghese, et al., 2005). Yet, the two NESTs in this study came in with the belief that by going through the program they would become *real* teachers and teaching knowledge would, indeed, be given to them. Rebecca's growing body of questions throughout the program indicates that teacher-preparation programs may not provide all the answers. They do provide teacher know-how (teaching methods, practical wisdom, teaching skills), but they do not dispense the view that there is *one* right way to teach. In particular, in this program, teaching theories were debated, various takes on communicative competence were compared, and the controversial role of the L1 in the L2 classroom was considered from multiple sides. However, this may be confusing to some students, as seen in this study (with Rebecca in particular). It could be that MATESOL students enter the program expecting to learn (finally) the *right* way to

teach. As the program continues, they may become disappointed, angry, disenfranchised, or confused because the one, *right* way to teach is never fully revealed. In fact, they may come to learn that there is no one, right way to teach, and this is very difficult to accept. Interestingly, one of the NNESTs, Maya, was trying to escape the *jug and mug* approach (i.e., the teacher as a mere provider) and was eager for her teaching and learning experience to be more interactive rather than one-directional. Natasha's expectations for her time in the MATESOL program were much vaguer than the others participants' expectations. Certainly, she wanted to improve as a teacher, but she had no clear-cut vision for either herself or what the MA program should offer.

These different sets of expectations among the four participants were also clearly reflected in their *identity goals* (Pizzolato, 2006) or *desired future selves* (Kubanyiova, 2012). For Rebecca and Katherine, their expectation regarding what their MATESOL experience would provide aligned perfectly with who they wanted to be as teachers. They wanted to be knowledgeable ESL teachers while keeping their original communication-oriented teacher personalities intact. Maya was excited to experience the type of interactive teaching in small groups that she had only read about. More importantly, she was aware that she would have to accept the challenge of teaching in a very different environment. Natasha, who had neither clear expectations for the program nor for her future teacher-self seemed to be lost between her past and the present. While she no longer fully believed in the teaching methods she had used in her home country, she was similarly irritated by the communicative-teaching methodology that she felt the MATESOL program was forcing on her. In terms of her potential development, Natasha was missing what Hamman, Gosselin, Romano and Bunuan (2010) called, "self-views that encompass a future orientation" (p. 1351). Simply put, without a goal to work toward, she fell short on progress.

The use of reflections has long been considered essential to stimulate a teacher's identity development or change. It is only through reflection that knowledge or experience can transfer into the teacher's own personal framework (Crandall, 2000; Rankin & Becker, 2006). However, I believe that Natasha's case shows that these reflections absolutely need to be (a) linked to an identity goal, and (b) constantly re-evaluated. It would be remiss to say that teacher trainees simply need to reflect more on their teaching, and that reflection alone will make development happen. A more autodidactic and self-motivated approach may be feasible for someone like Maya, who not only entered the program with a great variety and amount of experience but also entered with a striking self-awareness and agency. She was very clear about her goals from the beginning and knew that she had to adapt as much as possible. Natasha, on the other hand, began with a less solid foundation. This lack of guidance led to a feeling of being in limbo well before the end of the first year.

Relatedly, some researchers have suggested that teacher-identity development can be fostered, molded, and steered in the right direction, and this guidance should be integrated into teacher-preparation programs (Morgan & Clarke, 2011, p. 825). Alsup's (2006) book concluded with a number of reflective assignments that novice teachers could complete during and after their time in a teacher preparation program to foster identity development. While this is laudable, it is very difficult to conceive any such supportive program features that would help every teacher in a one-size-fits-all manner. With Natasha and Maya, of course, I encountered not novice teachers but teachers with varying degrees of previous teaching experience in their home countries. This is an important issue because many, if not most, of the NNS graduate students who are admitted to U.S. MATESOL programs can be assumed to have prior teaching experience, usually in a more familiar EFL context. This was true for the last four cohorts in this

MATESOL program and it seems generally plausible that foreign-born TESOL graduate students are accepted to the programs partially because of merits that demonstrate their desire and ability to teach English.

It follows that teacher preparation must consider the effects of a move from an EFL to an ESL context. This is commonly the order of things for MATESOL graduate students, and this was true for all four of the participants in this study. The results of Samimy and Brutt-Griffler's (1999) oft-cited study on NNS TESOL graduate students' perceptions in different contexts serves as a backdrop here. In their study, the NNS teachers felt perfectly authoritative in their various EFL contexts but struggled to adapt to their new ESL context; in spite of their experience, the label NNS began to weigh heavily on them. In the present study, Natasha clearly showed the greatest ill-effects from this transition, as I discussed at length in the previous chapters. Maya, however, appeared well prepared for the change. This was likely due to her own, previous training as well as the time she worked as faculty. During that time she had indirectly become familiar with teaching methodology favored in Western (i.e., second language) contexts. Interestingly, the change in teaching context also affected the NESTs. For them, however, this mostly related to the type of teaching ("real," "serious" teaching) that they did in the Intensive English Program. Rebecca, in particular, considered her extensive experience as an EFL teacher in Asia as "easy" and something anybody (i.e., any NS) can do. Hiring practices in English language teaching in many East Asian countries quite openly favor NSs without considering whether teachers have previous training or knowledge of teaching (for an overview of this and other issues surrounding English teaching in Asia, see Kirkpatrick, 2006; Kirkpatrick & Sussex, 2012). In terms of opportunities and status in the MATESOL program, the NESTs were certainly in a position of privilege. They were offered full scholarships (tuition waivers, health insurance,

155

and stipends) in connection with their perceived abilities to teach as assistants in the English language program. And they were continuously referred to, be it implicitly or explicitly, as *experts* in their MATESOL classes. Yet, their value there was determined solely by their place of origin, a fact which did not escape Rebecca and Katherine.

The privilege the native speakers had due to their speaker status permeated many aspects of the program and persisted throughout the duration of the program. Most importantly, both Rebecca and Katherine were the only NSs to enter the program that year and, at the same time, they were also the only two MA students to receive the coveted teaching assignments in the English Language Center. Officially, no policy barring NNS MATESOL students from a teaching position exists in the program, but in reality these limited teaching assignments seem to be reserved for NSs. From the perspective of program administrators, providing funding via teaching assignments first and foremost to incoming NS teachers is understandable. Even if they are not very good teachers yet, at least their NS status will shield them from any language-related criticism by the student population. Some studies (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Pacek, 2005), however, found that English learners benefit from and enjoy having both NS and NNS English teachers. Following these studies and with reference to the context of the MATESOL program, it may be desirable that an attempt be made for NNSs to receive a similar teaching assignment for at least a portion of their time in the program. While institutional and budget-related concerns obviously play a role, the gulf between teaching a total of eight classes (with four class meetings per week per class, 60 weeks; 1,920 contact hours total) over the course of the program compared with the six practicum lessons NNSs teach (with two class meetings per week, 6 weeks, 2 contact hours per week as the lead teacher, 12 contact hours as the lead teacher total) is considerable. Just as importantly, the 1,920-hour teaching assignment is accompanied by

mentoring from current English-teaching faculty with decades of experience. In such an environment, the potential, holistic development as a teaching professional, rather than merely a classroom instructor, cannot be overstated.

As I said, I recognize the reasoning behind considering the NS MATESOL students as a less risky choice in the absence of familiarity with NNS teachers' readiness for an ESL environment. In addition to possible worries regarding the English learners' reactions to NNESTs (which may be misguided according to the above mentioned research), there is an uncertainty about the NNSs' language proficiency and ability to teach in a communicative manner. The English language program also wants to avoid complaints from their students, who pay substantial tuition, and that risk is significantly lower if their teachers are NSs.

Establishing the NNS teachers' English proficiency when they enter the program can be challenging. A lengthy interview process to assess a prospective students' suitability prior to their admission to the program is often not feasible. However, if teaching assignments were to be made available for NNESTs in their second year, one way to measure their readiness would be to use an oral proficiency test that focuses on the teachers' capability to handle situations that they might encounter as instructors in the Intensive English Program. While this sounds ambitious, such a test already exists in the form of this university's adapted version of ETS's SPEAK test. It is geared toward teaching assistants in all subjects, and threshold scores exist for the different fields of study. I would imagine that prospective ESL teachers would need a near-perfect score to qualify. In addition to the familiarity professors have with their NNS students at this point in the program, the test scores could be used to determine who qualifies for the, in all likelihood, limited number of teaching assignments. If nothing else, this would add some transparency to the process. Ideally, of course, every MATESOL student would have multiple

opportunities to teach during their stay in the program. (Perhaps, a semester-long second practicum for the NNS teachers with students from the community could help close the experience gap to a degree.) From a recruitment perspective, teaching scholarships are, of course, an important tool to attract strong NS candidates. In reality, the NNSs in the program are either funded externally (such as through scholarships, which was the case with Maya and Natasha) or they have private funds to pay their own way. This, unfortunately, leaves out a large population of potential foreign students who could not secure one of the few and very competitive funding opportunities or who had the good fortune to be able to pay the ever-increasing costs of U.S. universities.

As I alluded to earlier, the NNS' English language proficiency is clearly an important issue. The question of how much language support should be provided to NNSs within the confines of an MATESOL program remains a topic of debate. In the MATESOL program under study, NSs and NNSs were routinely paired together, usually to provide support for the NNSs (with the possible exception of Pedagogical Grammar where NNSs had the advantage of having more explicit knowledge of grammar). Nemtchinova, Mahboob, Eslami, and Dogancay-Aktuna (2010) claimed that too many MATESOL programs focus solely on teacher education and do not spend enough time and effort on supporting NNSs' language needs. In my opinion, this presupposes that all NNS MATESOL students are in need of this *special treatment*. There is a fine line between providing linguistically deficient foreign students with support and potentially creating a what could be perceived as a condescending environment for fluent speakers of the language (who may also have years of teaching experience). What is worse though is that, in this way, a detrimental power dynamic (for the NNSs) may be established in a teacher education program that might not be easily undone.

While neither the NNSs nor the NSs should be reduced solely to their native or non-nativeness, some differences in the groups' trajectories became obvious. First, I want to discuss a little further what Natasha's and Maya's experiences were like and how their experiences related to past research on NNS teachers in MATESOL programs. Previous studies have claimed that the constant comparison with NS students and faculty can have a detrimental effect on NNS teachers' confidence (Milambiling, 2000; Saylor, 2000). This was clearly the case for Natasha, and her ideological clashes with the ideas propagated in the MATESOL program only worsened how she thought of herself as a teacher. Maya, in contrast, was more comfortable in her role and accepted for herself that she could learn from each encounter, be it with faculty, MA/PhD students (NSs and NNSs), or the English learners she met in the teaching practicum. While her confidence remained intact, her biggest struggle was to be away from her children (knowing she would not to be able to reunite with them for two years). Whatever difficulty she might have faced in the MATESOL program paled in comparison. (The effects of affective factors outside the classroom, such as homesickness, on teacher development remain sadly understudied.) In terms of membership in the lower-status group (the NNS), Maya fully accepted it and frequently referred to her U.S.-born classmates as her *NS friends*. Maya was fully aware of her strong accent and was hoping to "improve" on it (Interview 1), particularly because this was an expectation in her country for students who attend a university in an English-speaking country. This, however, was the extent of Maya's concerns with her speaker status. Natasha's narrative, in contrast, was heavily influenced by her giving up the privilege of being the most advanced English speaker among the teachers in her home country and being treated like a true NNS for the first time. Her focus was, therefore, mostly on her perceived deficiency. Cook (1999) called for a shift of the attention from native speakers to second language users, and this appeared to be

159

exactly what Natasha needed. There were no real weaknesses in her English, even if the NS model was used as a measuring stick. Yet, Natasha felt inferior as an assigned member to the lower-status group, and it affected her teaching and her developing teacher-self negatively. Considering Natasha and Maya's experiences as language learners and teachers, this seems like a wasted opportunity to follow Mahboob's (2010a) advice to "take diversity as a starting point" and promote a "multicultural and multinational perspective"(p. 1).

Rebecca and Katherine's experience lined up quite well with Kanno and Stuart's (2011) participants in their one-year longitudinal study of two NS novice teachers. In Kanno and Stuart's study, it took the teachers until their second set of classes to switch from seeing themselves as students to feeling that they were actually teachers. As MATESOL students, the NNS teachers in this study had to constantly move between their graduate student and teacher identities. Katherine, especially, noted her efforts to separate her student and teacher identities, for example, by dressing differently and carrying different types of bags on teaching days. Rebecca, on the other hand, decried the exhaustion that came from juggling student and teacher responsibilities day in and day out. Another similarity between the studies was the disenchantment that set in after teaching classes for a certain amount of time. Kanno and Stuart (2011) found that, as the student-teacher switch happened, the now-teachers identified less and less with their students and this lowered their opinion of their students to a degree (e.g., they did not believe excuses as readily). Even though Katherine and Rebecca were still students themselves, they, too, grew somewhat disillusioned with their teaching in the Intensive English Program in their second term. While this may have been partly due to the individual learners in these particular classes, it led both Katherine and Rebecca to rethink what student population they would like to work with in the future. Both still favored staying in the United States to teach

in an ESL context, but their ideas of where to teach was no longer restricted to university intensive English programs. For Rebecca, this type of high-stakes teaching also seemed to run counter to who she wanted to be as a teacher. Although, of course, she wanted to be a "real" (i.e., skilled) English teacher, she enjoyed working with the more mature, self-motivated practicum population. This was the type of group that afforded her the relaxed atmosphere she enjoyed in her own applied linguistics classrooms.

Looking at the different trajectories between NSs and NNSs, the speaker status certainly did play a role in some of Maya's and, definitely more so, Natasha's development. However, I found the most similarities among the trajectories of three teachers (Maya, Katherine, and Rebecca) who all began the program with a vision for their future-teacher selves. Kubanyiova (2012) theorized that the discrepancy between a current and a (desired) future-self could act as a facilitator for development. This was true for Maya as well as the NNESTs, although the depth of their developments varied along with the goals they were pursuing for their teacher selves. Maya was willing to make extensive changes, or additions, to her existing teacher identity. She embraced the challenges of delving into a new teaching context as well as a foreign academic culture. Rebecca and Katherine were well-equipped for the learning context due to their familiarity with U.S. academic culture. They made strides toward their, in comparison to Maya, more modest identity goals. Their teaching practice in the Intensive English Program was the most cited influence for establishing what they considered a competent-teacher-self. On the other hand, I believe Natasha's case is an example of how the lack of such an identity goal can likewise act as a sort of chasm, particularly when the individual is discontented with their present-teacher-self. Of course, Natasha did not start out in the MATESOL program unhappy with who she was as a teacher. It was her own comparisons to both the NS and the NNS teachers

161

like Maya that planted Natasha's doubts. She realized that she had previously relied heavily on her English proficiency to feel authoritative. In the new context, however, her initial teacher-self disappeared. Unlike the other three participants, Natasha did not target a new and improved version of her teacher-self. Quite in contrast, upon losing her original teacher-self (predicated on her speaker status in her home country), she rebelled against the type of ESL teacher she was expected to become. The result was a teacher that was confused and insecure about her teacher identity and future career in teaching.

The problems of NNS teachers who do not develop a strong, confident teacher-self go well beyond the individual. As Reis (2015) argued, these teachers may transfer their own insecurities onto their students, which could create a vicious cycle of future NNESTs carrying on a tradition of less confident language teachers. De Costa's (2015) focal participant (a NNS), also named Natasha, serves as a reminder that teacher trainees might benefit from focusing less on their speaker status. Over time, the Natasha in De Costa's study realized that her value as a teacher did not solely depend on whether she was a NS or a NNS. Instead, she began to see other strengths, such as her lesson planning and preparation skills. In the course of teacher preparation programs, some teachers' ideas of what makes a good teacher change and the participants in the present study were no exceptions. However, while the present study's Natasha saw that her teaching was too self-centered, she found it difficult to make changes in her actual teaching practice. Furthermore, she clung to the elevated speaker status she had enjoyed in her home country. Of course, it is problematic that she felt that she was forced into the lower status group in the first place. At the same time, she did not develop other strengths (like De Costa's participant) that might have alleviated some of her problems. I believe it is the role of the teacher educators to recognize teacher's strengths and provide help to novice and even experienced

teachers with finding and creating new strengths. While Natasha's overreliance on her English

proficiency was in itself problematic, it was also unfortunate that she became the victim of at

least some black-and-white distinction between NSs and NNSs. Her near-native proficiency

could be her strength from which both other teacher trainees and, of course, her future students

profit. Instead, this supposed strength was marginalized, with Natasha losing her confidence and

finding no new source of identity.

<center>Implications for teacher preparation programs</center>

My findings and discussions of the teachers' developing selves were written in the form

of narratives, which can be a useful tool in teacher preparation. Teachers' (and learners') stories

and histories are constantly evolving. I believe that using some form of narrative inquiry

(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006), particularly within a framework

such as possible selves theory, will allow teachers and learners to navigate their own stories.

They need to do this as they develop and increase their awareness of how time, interactions, and

settings shape one's self-perception and self-knowledge. Barkhuizen (2008) advocated for the

use of teacher-life histories in both language teacher education and research, while Kubanyiova

(2012) suggested that pre-service teachers should imagine their desirable (future) teacher selves

by employing an L2 motivational self-system (Dörnyei, 2009) in which they envision where and

who they want to be, and develop their own goals for obtaining that vision. These researchers'

efforts are important for promoting self-reflection and agency that will beneficially influence

teachers' trajectories. I also believe it is important that teacher educators understand the potential

benefits that pre-service teachers' stories can have on developing and shaping their own

development with an MATESOL program. Teacher educators should ask students in MATESOL

<center>163</center>

programs to recount, record, and reflect on their personal teacher development stories. All four teachers in this study reported that their understanding of their own development was greatly enhanced by their participation in the study. None of my participants knew what exactly the focus of the study was, so I can only speculate that a teacher preparation that explicitly gives teachers support with their creation of their own teacher stories and selves can have an even bigger impact. A major challenge for MATESOL programs stems from the individual differences (e.g., cultural background, amount and type of previous teaching) that incoming graduate students bring with them. This is why it is particularly important to become aware and include teachers' academic and personal histories in their training. Rather than lumping incoming students into two groups based on their L1 status (native speakers; non-native speakers), teacher educators should delve into the complex and variegated backgrounds and stories that all MATESOL students have.

Looking toward the future, Xu's (2013) study on Chinese EFL teachers is particularly interesting. Xu outlined one of the most difficult challenges with which teacher educators are confronted. Even if teacher educators acknowledge the importance of future-teacher-selves as a factor that promotes teacher-identity development (and teacher educators should), more trials await the teachers' sense of self even after the end of the preparation program. In Xu's study, only one of the four participants was able to practice her envisioned teacher identity in her teaching job, while the other three could not find a way to escape institutional pressure to embody a certain type of teacher. I discussed this topic at length with Maya because she will, upon her return home, be faced with finding a way to hold onto her new (and improved) teacher-self in the face of an academic culture that appears very resistant to change. Therefore, the goal of MATESOL programs needs to actively prepare teachers for a

variety of institutional and cultural contexts. In the program under study, I believe the focus was too much on teaching that takes place in Western ESL classrooms (particularly, in universities), and the students were left to their own devices in terms of how to adapt what they learn to foreign contexts. The practicum supervisor acknowledged this discrepancy in my interview with her saying that the coursework really does not account for the adaptation from the ESL context to English-teaching abroad. English teaching preparation could be improved by including classes in which teacher educators actively guide teachers' reflective processes from the beginning to the end of the program in light of their potential future careers and teaching contexts. I also think that all MATESOL students would benefit from classes or workshops that cover specific (non-ESL) teaching contexts. Such additions would help both NNS as well as NS teachers. As mentioned earlier, both Katherine and Rebecca decided to pursue non-university ESL teaching contexts after graduation. The difference in that case may be less noticeable than between U.S. universities and a whole range of EFL contexts, but modifications to their approach to teaching will nevertheless be necessary. Teacher preparation programs should make an effort to provide training that strikes a balance between depth and breadth (i.e., applicability to other settings). Clearly, institutional considerations (e.g., budget, teacher trainers' backgrounds) have to be factored in. One important step would be to increase peer learning as much as possible. NNS teachers in particular come to MATESOL programs with a wealth of experience and knowledge about numerous teaching contexts. I believe both NS and NNS teachers could benefit from using this knowledge base as extensively as possible. For example, teacher-preparation class discussions could take into account how different teaching methods can be adapted for specific teaching contexts that are familiar to the teachers. In the course of the study, I gave participants the chance to watch each other's teaching videos to see their colleagues' teaching and classroom-

management styles. All four teachers were excited about this opportunity, which they would not have had if not for their participation in the study. The impact of teachers' reflections upon viewing their own videos was immense as well. For Maya, it allowed her to adapt her teaching style over time and make it fit the new teaching context. All teacher trainees would benefit from seeing how their own teacher image aligns with what they see on the screen. While some programs already routinely use video recordings, I believe this to be indispensable for the teacher's reflective process and subsequent development and also comparatively easy (and cheap) to implement. The practicum supervisor in her interview stated that she was surprised that video recordings were not an obligatory part of all language teacher education programs as well as teaching assistants (e.g., in foreign languages) at this institution. One reason for this is the current absence of any department or unit that provides video-recordings upon request. It would, of course, be impossible for the practicum supervisor to observe classes and move around video-recording devices between the five classrooms at the same time.

The MATESOL curriculum also warrants a closer look. All of the participants had something negative to say about the classes and how they related to language classroom practice. Maya, of course, did not directly come out and criticize the class content, but she did hint that she was already familiar with almost all of the information covered in most of the classes. In fact, she pretended that she did not know everything, so that the other students would not feel bad or dislike her. She did try to discuss the issue of adapting the teaching knowledge to her former and future teaching context in her home country in both the classes and during the question and answer with a very well-known SLA and language teaching researcher. The fact that she received no real answer from him or her classwork led to some frustration on her part and a feeling that she somehow had to figure it out on her own. The two NESTs both felt that

166

classes that were not practice-oriented in nature (i.e., any class other than ESL Methods and Grammar) gave very little insight into language pedagogy and how to apply this theoretical knowledge about language learning in the classroom. Natasha had probably the most negative experience in her MA classes of the four participants, particularly with regards to her teaching. Her biggest concern surfaced during the practicum when she realized how poorly she was prepared to deal with problematic students or utilize her supposed NNS advantage in practice. One might be tempted to blame Natasha's lack of teaching experience for her missing classroom management skills. However, on the surface, of all participants, only Katherine could be considered to be a teaching novice with only six months of classroom experience. Natasha had taught for more than four years, but she lacked both experience with difficult students and proper guidance and/or training to develop her teaching skills and presence. Of course, she had hoped she would receive this during ESL Methods, the direct preparation class for the Practicum. Here, again, a better awareness of the teachers' initial selves and how their experience has shaped them as teachers prior to entering the program could be helpful for teacher educators.

The gap between SLA research and teaching, which was obvious here in the NESTs' attitudes particularly, has been addressed frequently over the years (R. Ellis, 2010). It appears one of the biggest obstacles is to find a way to make theoretical research findings directly usable in a classroom context. Additionally, applied linguists and teacher educators have to take into account the students' variety of cultural and academic backgrounds and their equally as diverse career goals. Katherine and Rebecca's goal was always for the MATESOL to be their terminal degree and their career to be in teaching. On the other hand, Natasha and Maya were interested in potentially continuing their education and participating in research. Natasha, especially, felt comfortable with the lack of pedagogical implications in the MA classes, although she realized

that this would probably not help her teacher development. Of course, one of her main criticisms was the constant push in her classes toward a communicative teaching approach. Considering my previous comments on the importance of both past and future teaching contexts, perhaps a more inclusive approach with regards to supposedly outdated language teaching approaches could be helpful. Not only did many of the teacher trainees teach and learn English and other languages using these approaches, but all of the teachers (including NS teachers) might at some point be confronted with environments where a communicative approach is difficult or impossible to implement.

To answer my own titular question of whether the NS and NNS teachers are 'all in the same boat', the answer would have to be a 'no'. However, it is not as simple a demarcation as putting NNSs on one side and NSs on the other. While there are some issues that do fall neatly along the NS/NNS fault lines, individual differences, such as the existence or absence of an imagined future teacher-self, had an enormous impact on the teachers' positive or negative development.

Limitations and directions for further research

While much can be learned from specific cases, the lack of generalizability of even a multiple-case research project has to be acknowledged. However, the participating teachers provided great insight into what happens when reasonably experienced teachers, who are also academically inclined students (here: recipients of competitive scholarships), go through teacher training in a Western context. On the other hand, I must point out that the MATESOL program that was the focus of the study should not be considered a stand-in for all MATESOL programs across the country. This program was connected to an Applied Linguistics PhD program and, as

168

such, many of the faculty members were active in a variety of research areas. A comparative study with students in a program where the MATESOL is the highest possible degree and faculty members are solely concerned with preparing teachers could produce interesting findings that may or may not contradict some of what I uncovered here. It would most certainly add to a growing corpus of case studies and illuminate the role context plays in teacher development. Finding out what works and what does not work could thus inform MATESOL curricula in a variety of settings. The different forms teaching practicums take in teacher preparation programs is another variable that merits consideration. While students in this program often complain that six weeks are too short, the practicum supervisor correctly pointed out that practicums at other institutions often provide less or no classroom teaching experience at all.

The possible selves framework is still fairly new in the field of language teacher education and applied linguistics. It seems well-suited for the type of practice-oriented research presented in this study. I could also imagine the use of a form of intervention study that could aim to find out the effectiveness of the aforementioned reflective practices on teachers who otherwise are experiencing the same curriculum. I would especially anticipate positive outcomes for teachers who pinpoint identity goals for themselves and are guided toward them by their teacher educators throughout the program through guided practice and reflection exercises. Judging from the positive feedback I received from my participants about the constant reflection they engaged in during the study, I believe directing this reflection toward a specific goal would show even better results.

Clearly, the field of language teacher education would benefit from more longitudinal studies in a variety of settings. Additionally, studies such as this one could provide even more insights into the lives of teachers by continuing on into their first years of teaching. I am

planning to do so with my participants to track whether some of their negative opinions about their MA experience change over time. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, time is an important factor that shapes peoples' narratives and I assume these teachers' stories to be no different.

As this study demonstrated, teacher preparation is a complex issue with an intricate interaction of many variables. I believe that both researchers and teachers are best served by accepting this complexity and utilizing it in their work. Instead of defining either NSs or NNSs by their nativeness or lack thereof, teacher educators should embrace what teachers bring with them to their programs and find out how to best cultivate qualities that will serve these teachers in the globalized world of today.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview 1 Sample questions
September 2013

Background information
1. Please tell me about your education so far. (High school, undergraduate, majors, minors.)

2. What languages have you studied and what is your proficiency in each? How long did you study and where? Tell me as much about your language learning experience as you can.

3. How did you first become interested in teaching English? What triggered your interest?

4. Have taken any courses related to linguistics, applied linguistics, or any related field?

Follow-up if yes: What would you say you learned from those courses?

5. Currently, what do you plan to do upon graduation?

Preparation for teaching
6. Have you received any teacher training prior to coming to MSU? If yes, please tell me about it.

7. Please tell me about your teaching experience thus far. Have you taught before? If yes, where, what kinds of classes and for how long?

8. What do you think are (or: will be) your strengths as a teacher?

9. Please describe what you feel are the most important characteristics of a good teacher and/or a good language or English teacher?

10. What are your expectations for year 1 in general, and the LNG 790/896 sequence in particular?

Sample journal prompts
Journal entry 1
November 2013

1. How useful are you finding the activities and articles in ESL Methods so far? If you have previous experience with teacher training, how does this class compare?

2. What has been most interesting or insightful about ESL Methods so far?

3. Looking toward the practicum, what are your concerns at the moment (if any)? Is there anything that worries you or do you have confidence in your teaching abilities?

4. Has the work in the English Language Center as well as your own coursework changed how you see yourself as a teacher?

5. Do you feel your teaching style will change as a result of your training in the MA program?

Sample journal prompts
Journal entry 2
December 2013

1. Has ESL Methods had any effect on your idea of what makes a good language teacher? If yes, what's changed?

2. Tell me your thoughts on your teaching demonstration and the critique that followed. What did you take away from the experience?

Interview 2 Sample questions
Natasha's questions (as an example)

1. Please reflect on how your confidence changed throughout the fall semester and what influenced it at different times.

(Follow-up: In your reflection you wrote that, at one point, the instructor said NNS shouldn't teach pragmatics. And you said your confidence took a hit also because it was the first time you were with native speakers, until you saw how great Maya was at teaching. Can you elaborate on that?)

2. What are some strengths and weaknesses in your teaching that LNG 790 has made you aware of? And, how did the course influence how you look at your teaching?

3. What did you learn from watching other teachers teach/demonstrate their lessons? Will you incorporate anything you saw? How? How much?

4. In what ways (if any) have your ideas about successful language teaching changed? What do you think has caused this change?

5. What would you say you learned from your courses in the fall that will benefit your teaching?

6. Since you have begun the program, what has had the biggest impact on you as a language teaching professional?

7. How do you feel about the professors' pairing up of NS and NNS (895 and 896)? Why do you think the professors do it?

8. You seemed to be more interested in the academic side of things when we first met. Has teaching grown on you? How do you see your future at this point? Still going for a PhD?

9. You identified self-centeredness as a negative characteristic for teachers in your recent reflection. Can you tell more about where that came from?

10. I remember when we first met you talked a lot about your English teacher in her home country who was kind of a role model for you. Do you ever think back to her teaching as you're learning all these teaching methods, etc.?

What are your overall thoughts on the MA program at this juncture?
Concerns/questions about the practicum or this semester or anything else?

APPENDIX D

Interview 3Sample questions

1. Which social and academic aspect of your experience in your first year has had the biggest impact on you as a person <u>and</u> as a teacher?

2. In what ways (if any) have your ideas about language teaching/learning changed this year? What do you think has caused this change?

3. In what ways (if any) has your teaching philosophy changed? What has remained the same?

4. Did your opinion on what makes a good teacher change because of this practicum? If not because of the practicum, was there something else?

5. To what degree was your teaching influenced by what you've learned in the program so far? Identify specific aspects of the program that have had an impact. What other aspects have had an impact?

6. Rate the usefulness of the teaching practicum on a scale of 1-6. (1=not useful at all, 6 very useful). What did you like about the practicum? Is there anything you would change about the practicum to make it a more useful experience for the aspiring teachers?

    - Follow-up: Different teachers have criticized a few aspects of the practicum (and the preparation for it) so far. Please comment on each of the following: 1) lack of constructive feedback; 2) practicum classes not being like real classes (e.g., no homework); 3) lack of preparation in classroom management; 4) not being given enough teaching techniques prior to the practicum (e.g., for vocab teaching).

7. We have previously discussed the MA curriculum. What classes did you find to be more or less useful to you as a teacher? What knowledge from your classes have you used in your teaching? Why do you think so and what change would you like to see made to these classes or the curriculum as a whole?

8. Has your overall confidence in your teaching skills increased over this first year? Why/Why not? How can this confidence be enhanced in the coming year?

9. Do you feel your identity as a teacher changed in your first year? If so, how? Which aspects have remained the same?

10. At this moment in time, what career do you see yourself pursuing upon graduation and has this career choice been affected by your first year in the MA TESOL program?

Interview Questions Practicum Supervisor

1) Having been in charge of the practicum for many years, can you talk about how it has changed or evolved over time (if it has)?

2) What are some of the differences between how the different supervisors have approached it?

3) What do you think are the biggest challenges the teachers face during the practicum?

4) What are the most common complaints or suggestions you have gotten regarding the practicum over the years?

5) Can you envision making any changes or improvements (if you can think of any that would be feasible)?

6) One of the teachers mentioned that you gave them a handout about the advantages that NNS have and they found it insightful. Can you talk about what the handout was about and why you include it in your materials?

7) I know that usually NS are paired with a NNS during the practicum. What advantages and/or disadvantages does this have in your opinion?

8) What kinds of problems have NNS teachers had over the years? NS teachers?

9) My participants had very different amounts and types of previous teaching experience. Maya, in particular, has a lot of experience teaching, but in a very different context. One of the issues that has become evident is the question of how well the MA program prepares teachers for a variety of contexts. For example, if Maya goes back to classrooms of 50-200 students, how well will what she's learned here translate to that context? What is your view on that?

10) Do you feel like the practicum benefits some teachers more than others? If yes, why?
On a related note, do you believe that both NSs and NNSs get the same or different benefits from the program?

11) One thing I noticed is that (not just in the practicum) NNSs are paired with NSs seemingly with the intent that the NSs help the NNSs. Could you imagine going the other way more, i.e. making more use of the NNS' knowledge base for the NS to learn from?

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

Akbari, R., & Dadvand, B. (2011). Does formal teacher education make a difference? A comparison of pedagogical thought units of B.A. versus M.A. teachers. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(1), 44-60.

Allwright, R. (1988). *Observation in the language classroom*. London: Longman.

Alsup, J. (2006). *Teacher identity discourses: Negotiating personal and professional spaces*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Amin, N. (1999). Minority women teachers of ESL: Negotiating white English. In G. Braine (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching* (pp. 93-104). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Amin, N. (2001). Nativism, the native speaker construct, and minority immigrant women teachers of English as a second language. *CATESOL Journal, 13*(1), 89-107.

Amin, N. (2004). Nativism, the native speaker construct, and minority immigrant women teachers of English as a second language. In L. D. Kamhi-Stein (Ed.), *Learning and teaching from experience: Perspectives on nonnative English-speaking professionals* (pp. 61-90). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London, UK: Verso.

Bailey, K. M. (1992). The processes of innovation in language teacher development: What, why and how teachers change. In J. Flowerdew, M. Brock & S. Hsia (Eds.), *Perspectives on second language teacher education* (pp. 253-282). Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Hartford, B. (Eds.). (1997). *Beyond methods: Components of second language teacher education*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Barkhuizen, G. (2008). A narrative approach to exploring context in language teaching. *English Language Teaching Journal, 62*(3), 231-239. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccm043

Barkhuizen, G. (2010). An extended positioning analysis of a pre-service teacher's better life small story. *Applied Linguistics, 31*(2), 282-300.

Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 20*, 107-128. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2003.07.001

Beijaard, D., Verloop, N., & Vermunt, J. D. (2000). Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 16*, 749-764. doi: 10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00023-8

Bendle, M. F. (2002). The crisis of 'identity' in high modernity. *The British Journal of Sociology, 53*(1), 1-18. doi: 10.1080/00071310120109302

Benke, E., & Medgyes, P. (2005). Differences in teaching behavior between native and non-native speaker teachers: As seen by the learners. In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Nonnative language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 195-215). New York, NY: Springer.

Bhatt, R. M. (2002). Experts, dialects, and discourse. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 12*(1), 74-109.

Bilaniuk, L. (2005). *Contested tongues: Language politics and cultural correction in Ukraine*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Block, D. (2007). *Second language identities*. London: Continuum.

Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching, 36*(2), 81-109.

Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education: research and practice*. London: Continuum.

Braine, G. (2002). Academic literacy and the nonnative speaker graduate student. *Journal of English for academic purposes, 1*(1), 59-68.

Braine, G. (2010). *Nonnative speaker English teachers: Research, pedagogy and professional growth*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Braine, G. (Ed.). (1999). *Non-native educators in English language teaching*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carlsen, W. (1991). Questioning in classrooms: A sociolinguistic perspective. *Review of Educational Research, 61*(157-178).

Cheung, Y. L., Said, S. B., & Park, K. (Eds.). (2015). *Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research*. New York: Routledge.

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clarke, M. (2009). The ethico-politics of teacher identity. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 41*, 185–200. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-5812.2008.00420.x

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (3rd ed., pp. 477-487). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*(2), 185-209.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2014). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). Oakwood,CA: Sage publications.

Crandall, J. J. (2000). Language teacher education. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 20*(34-55).

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Crookes, G. (2003). *A practicum in TESOL - Professional development through teaching practice*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Cross, R. (2010). Language teaching as sociocultural activity: Rethinking language teacher practice. *The Modern Language Journal, 94*(3), 434-452.

Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2 ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2012). A global language. In P. Seargeant & J. Swann (Eds.), *English in the world: History, diversity, change* (pp. 152-177). Abingdon: Routledge.

Curtis, A., & Romney, R. (2006). *Colour, race and English language teaching: Shades of meaning*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Danielewicz, J. (2001). *Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy, and teacher education*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

De Costa, P. (2015). Tracing reflexivity through a narrative and identity lens. In Y. L. Cheung, S. B. Said & K. Park (Eds.), *Cheung, Y. L., Said, S. B., & Park, K. (Eds.). (2015). Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research. New York: Routledge.* (pp. 135-147). New York: Routledge.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second*

language acquisition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., & Kubanyiova, M. (2014). *Motivating learners, Motivating teachers: Building vision in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (Eds.). (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Duff, P. A. (2012). How to conduct case study research. In S. Gass & A. Mackey (Eds.), *Research methodologies in second language acquisition* (pp. 95-116). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Duff, P. A. (2013). Case study research. In C. Chapelle (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Duff, P. A., & Uchida, Y. (1997). The negotiation of teachers' sociocultural identities and practices in postsecondary EFL classrooms. *TESOL Quarterly, 31*(3), 451-486.

Ellis, E. M. (2004). The invisible multilingual teacher: The contribution of language background to australian ESL teachers' professional knowledge and beliefs. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 1*(2), 90-108.

Ellis, R. (2010). Second language acquisition, teacher education and language pedagogy. *Language teaching, 43*(2), 182-201.

Evans, V., & Green, M. (2006). *Cognitive linguistics: An introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Flowerdew, J., Brock, M., & Hsia, S. (Eds.). (1992). *Perspectives on second language teacher education*. Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Fram, S. M. (2013). The constant comparative analysis method outside of grounded theory. *Qualitative Report, 18*(1), 1-25.

Freeman, D. (1996). Renaming experience/ reconstructing practice: Developing new understandings of teaching. In D. Freeman & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 221-241). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Freeman, D. (2002). The hidden side of the work: teacher knowledge and learning to teach. *Language Teaching, 35*(1), 1-13.

Freeman, D., & Johnson, K. E. (1998). Reconceptualizing the knowledge-base of language

teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(3), 397–417.

Freeman, D., & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (1996). *Teacher learning in language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Friedman, D. A. (2010). Speaking correctly: Error correction as a language socialization practice in a Ukrainian classroom. *Applied Linguistics, 31*(3), 346-367.

Gao, X. (2010). *Strategic language learning: The roles of agency and context.* Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.

Gee, J. P. (2001). Identity as an analytic lens for research in education. In W. G. Secada (Ed.), *Review of research in education* (Vol. 25, pp. 99-125). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Golombek, P. R., & Johnson, K. E. (2004). Narrative inquiry as a mediational space: examining emotional and cognitive dissonance in second-language teachers' development. *Teachers and Teaching, 10*(3), 307-327.

Graddol, D. (1999). The decline of the native speaker. In D. Graddol & U. Meinhof (Eds.), *English in a Changing World. AILA Review 13* (pp. 57-68).

Graddol, D. (2006). *English next* (Vol. 62). London: British Council.

Hamman, D., Gosselin, K., Romano, J., & Bunuan, R. (2010). Using possible-selves theory to understand the identity development of new teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(7), 1349-1361.

Higgins, E. T. (1987). Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review, 94*, 319-340.

Hogg, M. A., & Abrams, D. (1988). *Social identifications: A social psychology of intergroup relations and group processes.*: Taylor & Frances/Routledge.

Holliday, A. (2005). *The struggle to teach English as an international language*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Holliday, A. (2008). Standards of English and politics of inclusion. *Language Teaching, 41*(1), 119-130.

Inbar-Lourie, O. (2005). Mind the gap: Self and perceived native speaker identities of EFL teachers. In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 265-281). New York, NY: Springer.

Johnson, K. E. (2001). Social identities and the NNES MATESOL student. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED457682.pdf

Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (Eds.). (2002). *Teachers' narrative inquiry as professional development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (Eds.). (2011). *Research on second language teacher education: A sociocultural perspective on professional development*. New York: Routledge.

Johnston, B. (2003). *Values in English language teaching*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kamhi-Stein, L. D. (Ed.). (2004). *Learning and teaching from experience: Perspectives on nonnative English-speaking professionals.* Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Kanno, Y., & Stuart, C. (2011). Learning to become a second language teacher: Identities-in-practice. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(2), 236-252. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01178.x

Kirkpatrick, A. (2006). Which model of English: Native speaker, nativised or lingua franca? In M. Saraceni & R. Rubdy (Eds.), *English in the World: Global Rules, Global Roles* (pp. 71-83). London: Continuum Press.

Kirkpatrick, A., & Sussex, R. (2012). *English as an international language in Asia.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Kubanyiova, M. (2007). *Teacher development in action: an empirically-based model of promoting conceptual change in in-service language teachers in Slovakia.* Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nottingham.

Kubanyiova, M. (2009). Possible selves in language teacher development. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 314-332). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Kubanyiova, M. (2012). *Teacher development in action: Understanding language teachers' conceptual change*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kubota, R., & Lin, A. M. Y. (Eds.). (2009). *Race, culture, and identities in second language education: Exploring critically engaged practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2005). What do students think about the pros and cons of having a native speaker teacher? In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 217-241). New York, NY: Springer.

Le Ha, P. (2008). *Teaching English as an international language: Identity, resistance and negotiation*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury, CA: Sage Publications.

Liu, J. (1999). Nonnative English-speaking professionals in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*(1), 85-102.

Liu, Y., & Fisher, L. (2006). The development patterns of modern foreign language student teachers' conceptions of self and their explanations about change: Three cases. *Teacher Development, 10*(3), 343-360.

Llurda, E. (2005a). Non-native TESOL students as seen by practicum supervisors. In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges, and contributions to the profession* (pp. 131-154). New York: Springer.

Llurda, E. (Ed.). (2005b). *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges, and contributions to the profession*. New York: Springer.

Mahboob, A. (2010a). The NNEST lens. In A. Mahboob (Ed.), *The NNEST lens: Non native English speakers in TESOL* (pp. 1-17). Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Mahboob, A. (Ed.). (2010b). *The NNEST lens: Non native English speakers in TESOL*. Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Mann, S. (2005). The language teacher's development. *Language Teaching, 38*, 103-118.

Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist, 41*(9), 954-969.

Medgyes, P. (1992). Native or non-native: who's worth more? *ELT Journal, 46*(4), 340-349. doi: 10.1093/elt/46.4.340

Medgyes, P. (1994). *The non-native teacher*. London: Macmillan.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Milambiling, J. (2000). Comments on Vivian Cook's "Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching": How nonnative speakers as teachers fit into the equation. *TESOL Quarterly, 34*(2), 324-328.

Miller, P. (2004). Review of 'Values in English language teaching'. *TESOL-EJ, 7*(2). Retrieved from http://www-writing.berkeley.edu/tesl-ej/ej26/r3.html

Morgan, B., & Clarke, M. (2011). Identity in second language teaching and learning. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (Vol. 2, pp. 817-836). New York: Routledge.

Moussu, L. (2006). *Native and nonnative English-speaking English as a second language teachers: Students attitudes, teacher self-perceptions, and intensive English administrator beliefs and practices*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Purdue University.

Moussu, L., & Llurda, E. (2008). Non-native English-speaking English language teachers: History and research. *Language Teaching, 41*(3), 315-348.

Muir, T. (2010). Using video-stimulated recall as a tool for reflecting on the teaching of Mathematics: Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia.

Nemtchinova, E. (2005). Host teachers' evaluations of nonnative-English-speaking teacher trainees: A perspective from the classroom. *TESOL Quarterly, 39*(2), 235-262.

Nemtchinova, E. (2010). The "Who's worth more?" question revisited: MA TESOL practicum host teachers' perceptions of NES and NNES teacher trainees. In A. Mahboob (Ed.), *The NNEST Lens: Non Native English Speakers in TESOL* (pp. 129-153). Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Nemtchinova, E., Mahboob, A., Eslami, Z., & Dogancay-Aktuna, S. (2010). Training non-native English-speaking TESOL professionals. In A. Mahboob (Ed.), *The NNEST Lens: Non Native English Speakers in TESOL* (pp. 222-238). Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Norton, B. (2001). Non-participation, imagined communities, and the language classroom. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research* (pp. 159-171). Harlow, England: Pearson Education.

Norton, B., & Early, M. (2011). Researcher identity, narrative inquiry, and language teaching research. *TESOL Quarterly, 45*(3), 415-439. doi: 10.5054/tq.2011.261161

Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2011). Identity, language learning, and social change. *Language Teaching, 44*(4), 412-446. doi: 10.1017/S0261444811000309

Nunan, D. (1988). *The learner-centered curriculum: A study in second language teaching*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Pacek, D. (2005). 'Personality not nationality': Foreign students' perceptions of a nonnative speaker lecturer of English at a British university. In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Nonnative language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 243-262). New York, NY: Springer.

Palmer, P. J. (2007). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life* (10th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Park, G. (2012). "I am never afraid of being recognized as NNES": One woman teacher's journey in claiming and embracing the NNES identity. *TESOL Quarterly, 46*(1), 127-151. doi: 10.1002/tesq.4

Pedersen, P. (1995). *The Five Stages of Culture Shock: Critical Incidents Around the World*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pizzolato, J. E. (2006). Achieving college student possible selves: Navigating the space between commitment and achievement of long-term identity goals. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 12*(1), 57-69.

Rankin, J., & Becker, F. (2006). Does reading the research make a difference? A case study of teacher growth in FL German. *The Modern Language Journal, 90*(3), 353-372.

Reis, D. S. (2015). Making sense of emotions in NNESTs' professional identities and agency. In Y. L. Cheung, S. B. Said & K. Park (Eds.), *Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research* (pp. 31-43). New York: Routledge.

Richards, J. C. (2008). Second Language Teacher Education Today. *RELC Journal, 39*(2), 158-177. doi: 10.1177/0033688208092182

Rodgers, C. R., & Scott, K. H. (2008). The development of the personal self and professional identity in learning to teach. *Handbook of research on teacher education,* (pp. 732-755).

Sachs, G. T., Brock, M., & Lo, R. (Eds.). (1996). *Directions in second language teacher education*. Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Samimy, K. K., & Brutt-Griffler, J. (1999). To be a native or non-native speaker: Perceptions of "non-native" students in a graduate TESOL program. In G. Braine (Ed.), *Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching* (pp. 127-144). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Savignon, S. J. (2000). Communicative language teaching. In M. Byram (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning.* (pp. 125-129). London: Routledge.

Saylor, K. A. J. (2000). *"But this program is designed for native speakers …": The perceived needs of nonnative English speaking students in MA TESOL programs.* Unpublished master's thesis. University of Minnesota. Minneapolis.

Sherman, S. J., Hamilton, D. L., & Lewis, A. C. (1999). Perceived entitativity and the social identity value of group memberships. In D. Abrams & M. A. Hogg (Eds.), *Social identity and social cognition.* (pp. 80-110). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Tajfel, H. (1978). *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of*

intergroup relations. London: Academic Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations.* (pp. 33-47). Monterey, CA: Brookes-Cole.

Tatar, S., & Yildiz, S. (2010). Empowering nonnative-English speaking teachers in the classroom. In A. Mahboob (Ed.), *The NNEST lens: Non native English speakers in TESOL* (pp. 114-128). Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Tedick, D. J. (Ed.). (2005). *Second language teacher education: International perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *Journal of Evaluation, 27*(2), 237-246. doi: 10.1177/1098214005283748

Thompson, A. S., & Fioramonte, A. (2012). Nonnative speaker teachers of Spanish: Insights from novice teachers. *Foreign Language Annals, 45*(4), 564-579. doi: 10.1111/j.1944-9720.2013.01210.x

Tsui, A. B. M. (2007). Complexities of identity formation: A narrative inquiry of an EFL teacher. *TESOL Quarterly, 41*(4), 657-680. doi: 10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00098.x

van Lier, L. (2005). Case study. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 195-208). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Varghese, M., Morgan, B., Johnston, B., & Johnson, K. A. (2005). Theorizing language teacher identity: Three perspectives and beyond. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education, 4*(1), 21-44.

Walberg, H. (1977). Decision and perception: New constructs for research on teaching effects. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 7*(1), 12-20.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wong, C. Y. (2009). Are native speakers "good" language instructors? A case study of untrained ESL tutors. *The Annual Review of Education, Communication, and Language Sciences (ARECLS), 6*, 122-140.

Xu, H. (2013). From the imagined to the practiced: A case study on novice EFL teachers' professional identity change in China. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 31*, 79-86.