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Discovery of future-selves as TESOL professionals: Exploring the identity formation of nonnative preservice teachers.

Abstract

The present study explored the process through which nonnative TESOL students construct their professional identities and discover their future professional-selves. In particular, this study found nonnative tutors (NNSTs) to have a significant influence upon the social circumstances of nonnative students (NNSSs). This was a qualitative research employing a case study as a basic framework, and involving semi-structured interviews with 3 NNSTs and 4 NNSSs on an MSc TESOL programme at the University of Edinburgh. In the findings of the study, three overarching themes emerged: (1)Confidence, (2)Identity, and (3)Fairness. Drawing on a sociocultural approach as a theoretical lens, the findings showed that the presence of NNSTs exerted a positive influence on students' self-perceptions as NNSs and on their professional identity formation. More notably, this study found that negotiating identity is a situated, dynamic, and contextualised social process and the NS construct is a significant parameter in the NNSSs' professional identity formation in terms of being "a lived reality" (Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 1999:429) in NNSSs' sociocultural contexts. Based on the discussion of findings and the main outcomes, this study makes the following recommendations for teacher education programmes (TEPs): 1) As an important co-constructor of NNSSs' professional identities, TEPs should be sensitive to various local contexts and address how these contexts contribute to frame students' beliefs and identity constructions. 2) TEPs should enable NNSSs to challenge the validity of the NS construct and empower them as ELT professionals by offering alternative discourses such as a sense of ownership of English and the notion of expertise. 3) TEPs should provide NNSSs opportunities to foster a critical awareness of their own contexts in order to allow them to make more informed decisions about establishing their legitimacy as ELT educators by recognising inequitable constraints imposed by contexts and deconstruct them. Finally, based on the findings of the study, I argue that research on NNS preservice teachers' identity formation should consider the various contexts in which they were, are and will be situated for in-depth accounts of the situated nature of identities.

Contents

List of abbreviations

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

ELT   English Language Teaching

ET   English Teacher

L2   Second Language

NNS   Nonnative Speaker

NNSET   Nonnative Speaking English Teacher

NNSS   Nonnative Speaker (TESOL) Students

NNST   Nonnative Speaker Tutors

NS   Native Speaker

NSET   Native Speaking English Teacher

SCT   Sociocultural Theory

TEP   Teacher Education Programme

Chapter 1 Introduction

Teaching emerges from our inwardness (Palmer, 2007). "We teach who we are … knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject (ibid:2-3)." The identity of teachers is vital to their professional growth when practicing teaching, because their values, beliefs and self-perceptions impact upon the way they teach (Richards and Lockhart, 1994). Therefore, the process of construing who you are as professionals is essential for any language teacher, especially in the case of nonnative speaking English teachers (NNSETs: teachers who do not speak English as their first language), who confront challenges imposed by both others and themselves. In particular, their identities as 'nonnative speakers' (NNSs) or 'Second Language (L2) learners' might challenge their growth as English teachers (ETs) because those concepts are tenaciously connected to the "native speaker fallacy", which refers to the idea that a native speaker (NS) is an ideal teacher of that language (Phillipson, 1992:195). This affects the self-esteem of NNSETs and makes them self-conscious about their qualities as ELT educators. Previous research on the self-perceptions and identities of NNSETs has demonstrated a resultant struggle with achieving authority as legitimate TESOL professionals (e.g. Liu, 2004).

1.1 The research aim

Given the exponentially growing population of NNS students (NNSSs) enrolled in TESOL programmes, understanding the way in which they build their professional identities and strive to be recognised as legitimate ELT educators is important. Nevertheless, little has been written about the factors which affect the shaping of NNSSs' professional identities, even though the significance of building positive identity as language teachers has attracted much attention. Hence, the present study aims to explore the process through which NNSSs construct their professional identities and discover their future professional-selves by considering the impact of NNS tutors (NNSTs) who are viewed as a significant factor in constituting NNSSs' sociocultural circumstances. That is, this study attempts to understand how NNSTs impact on the identity formation of NNSSs as future TESOL professionals. It would be worthwhile to explore the influence of NNSTs on the formation of NNSSs' identities as members of the same TESOL community, particularly, when "people derive their identity (their sense of self, their self-concept) in great part from the social categories to which they belong" (Hogg and Abrams, 1988:19) and identities refer to "how people understand possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2000:5). In order to achieve this aim, the research questions posed in this study are:

1) What are the self-images non-native TESOL students and non-native tutors see reflected in their non-nativeness?

2) What are non-native TESOL students' and non-native tutors' perceptions about being non-native speakers?

3) What are non-native TESOL students' initial perceptions about being taught by non-native tutors?

4) How do non-native TESOL students perceive the presence of non-native tutors as influencing their own identities as TESOL professionals?

NNSSs' views are the focus of this research, but NNSTs' views are also explored in order to provide rich insights into the context and to show a comparison between the views of preservice teachers at the beginning stages of their career and between those further on. Through pursuing the answers to these research questions, this study seeks to present a more holistic picture of NNS preservice teachers' identity formation. Also, the results may provide significant implications for teacher education programmes (TEPs) and the field of TESOL which are increasingly required to address the issues of NNSSs' development of professional identities.

1.2 The structure of this dissertation

For this research aim, the first two parts of chapter 2 provide a review of the literature on beliefs and sociocultural theory to provide an understanding of the theoretical lens through which this study explores the research inquiry. The third section discusses the current debate on the NS construct, and its implications for NNSETs. Finally, the identity theories that have helped me understand the identity of NNSETs are presented.

Chapter 3 describes the research design of this study in detail. It discusses the theoretical perspective and methodology. It then provides an account of the research method (semi-structured interviews) with a detailed description of sampling and data analysis procedures as well as the ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and results of interview data analysis through the

exploration of three key themes. In this chapter, my general comments on the major findings are also provided. The chapter 5 discusses the main outcomes from the findings and their implications for TEPs and future research.

1.3 Positionality and study limitations

In this interpretive research, I have an undeniable position as the researcher in terms of relationships (as a peer and student of my participants), my own expectations, interests and of my background as a NNSS. This position is likely to affect the nature of interviews and my interpretation of data. However, by being fully aware of and acknowledging my position rather than denying it, I attempted to be another participant in my research and understand it as an insider (Thomas, 2009). This is because knowledge is situated in relationships between people, and the researcher takes an essential role in the discovery of this situated knowledge in interpretivist research (ibid.). This is because the stories of participants are also my journey for the discovery of my professional identity. In addition, it should be noted that the terms NS and NNS are used in this study because readers are likely to be more familiar with them than other ones such as "international professionals" (Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 1999:428) (as they are in more public use) not because I am in favour of them. In fact, I believe that this naming convention intensifies the dichotomy between NSs and NNSs and should be changed, but that is beyond the scope of this study.

Moreover, it needs to be mentioned that the data reported in this study were derived from a small purposive sample. Therefore the findings must be interpreted with caution, as they cannot be representative of other populations. Nonetheless, by having collected the data from various participant samples with diverse contexts, the whole data is rich

enough to allow readers to discover their own meanings of the case being studied through their interpretations of participants' stories. Next, for this research inquiry, I discuss the important literature to provide an understanding of theoretical background.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter, first, discusses the definition of beliefs and the approach to them within this study for the exploration of identity formation. Next, a sociocultural approach as theoretical lens is considered along with its key notions such as mediation, transition and context. The third section, as important theoretical background, explores the NS construct with reference to current discussions around it and its implications for NNESTs. Finally, I discuss how the NS construct has been tied to NNSETs' identities through previous research and present the influential identity theories with the key features of NNSETs' identity on which this study is based.

2.1 Beliefs and identity formation

In this study, participants' beliefs about social and physical contextual factors (e.g. teaching contexts) were shown to mediate their identity formation. Identity formation relates to how people understand their present realities, negotiate conflicting expectations, and derive meaning out of their chaotic environments (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). All these processes are mediated by people's subjective but contextualised beliefs. This view is based on the following assumptions: beliefs strongly influence how an individual characterises phenomena and makes sense of the world (Pajares, 1992),

beliefs are the most powerful driving force behind the decisions an individual makes throughout his or her life (Bandura, 1986; Kumaravadivelu, 2012), and beliefs are a "filtering mechanism through which new encounters and experiences are screened, interpreted, understood, and absorbed." (Kumaravadivelu, 2012:60). Hence, in this study, beliefs were seen as crucial in forming one's thoughts and actions, and therefore the participants' perceptions and expressions were viewed as the reflection of their beliefs. When considering the aim of this study, these ideas are significant because participants' beliefs are viewed as the lens through which they perceive, define and narrate their contexts and experiences, which subsequently impact upon their identity formation.

2.1.1 The definition of beliefs

There are various notions of what beliefs are, and different scholars describe them in different ways. To some scholars, beliefs are viewed as a sort of knowledge or something with a cognitive component (e.g. Wenden, 1999). Wenden defines beliefs as a "subset of metacognitive knowledge" which is value-related but held more tenaciously than metacognitive knowledge (1999:436). On the other hand, to Nespor (1987), beliefs are posited to have more affective and evaluative components, which connect them to people's self identities. Here, for the purpose of this study, and in order to show how beliefs and identities are inextricably linked, the definition of beliefs will be "views, propositions, and convictions one dearly holds, consciously or unconsciously, about the truth value of something" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012:60). Also, in this study beliefs are treated as being dynamic, contextualised and social rather than static and abstracted from specific contexts (Barcelos, 2006), because the agents of beliefs - the participants within this study - are social beings who constantly interact with their environments.

Next, I consider an interpretive approach to beliefs, which tries to understand them in social contexts.

2.1.2 The approach to beliefs

The view that beliefs are shaped by cultural and social factors and embedded in specific contexts is shared by many scholars. Pajares (1992) points out that the context-specific nature of beliefs makes them difficult to measure. Kalaja (1995) provides definitions of beliefs based on the recognition of learners' interrelation with the environment. According to Kalaja, student beliefs could be viewed as emerging out of interaction with others, and as being socially constructed, making them basically social in nature (1995). Also, Barcelos (2006) introduces a contextual approach to beliefs, which focuses upon the contextual and emergent nature of beliefs, and on the interpretation of students' beliefs in contexts. From this viewpoint, the way in which participants organise their perceptions of events is crucial, because their thoughts are situated in the specific contexts and they make decisions upon the basis of the realities that they have socially constructed, not upon objective reality (ibid.).

Furthermore, from the perspective of social constructivists, features such as situatedness in individual contexts and social construction are more emphasised in conceptualising beliefs. According to Woods (2006), interconnected beliefs are situated in social contexts and shaped through social interactions, which means that they are not fixed but constantly evolving within an individual. These views suggest that beliefs largely grow out of interaction with others and the sociocultural milieu shared by people. That is, beliefs are relative and responsive to contexts, which refer not only to the physical environment but also to "the interaction between human beings" (Benson and Lor,

1999:464). This view of beliefs is particularly relevant to the current study when considering NNSSs' identity formation within the field of language teaching. This field has increasingly demonstrated a shift in socialcultural turn, which defines human learning and the development of consciousness as originating from dynamic social activities, and situated in social contexts (Johnson, 2006).

2.2 The sociocultural perspective in theoretical Framework

The way in which we conceptualise teachers' beliefs in a sociocultural paradigm is important for the purposes of this study because a sociocultural perspective allows us to see the inherent interconnectedness of social and cognitive factors (Johnson, 2009). For this reason a sociocultural theoretical lens is used here to understand and analyse the NNSSs' beliefs and identity formation. Over the last few decades, there has been a shift in the theoretical and methodological frame of research in the TESOL field, moving from traditional cognitive perspectives to more nuanced critical and sociocultural frames (Miller, 2009). In particular, it is noted that the consideration of teacher identity needs to take account of issues such as the salience of sociocultural contexts (ibid.). Moreover, the positivistic paradigm has been found to be insufficient for exploring the complexities of teachers' mental lives and the various dimensions of their professional worlds (Johnson, 2006). Hence, the complexities of preservice teachers' beliefs and identity formation are better explained and understood through interpretative theoretical frameworks. The remainder of this section argues that the sociocultural approach has convincing explanatory power as a theoretical lens in exploring the identity formation.

2.2.1 Sociocultural theory (SCT)

The Vygotskian SCT emphasises that social, cultural, historical and institutional

contexts and structures play determining roles in shaping what a person thinks, believes and acts (Wertsch, 1991; Wertsch et al, 1993). SCT epistemologically stances itself on the position that human learning is a dynamic, socially mediated activity, which is situated in a variety of physical, social contexts and is distributed across tools, activities and humans (Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). From this perspective, individuals' thinking, such as regarding their beliefs originates in and is formed through social interactions within specific activities. These activities are socially and institutionally structured, are meaningful in culturally and historically situated ways, (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991), and determine the way that individuals' consciousness develops (Johnson and Golombek, 2003). Therefore, participation in sociocultural processes is of paramount importance to all activities of human mental functioning, such as the development of identity. Next, I discuss three key notions of SCT which help explore the identity formation of NNSSs within this study. These are mediation, transition and contexts.

Mediation

The idea that the human mind is mediated is the most fundamental concept in SCT (Lantolf, 2000). SCT emphasises the ways in which symbolic and cultural artifacts establish mediated relationships between ourselves and the world, and frame our higher mental functioning (Lantolf, 2000; Wertsch, 1991). Human cognitive development first originates on a social level, is mediated through socioculturally constructed tools, and is then transferred into the intramental level. That is, what people believe, think and value is framed through the mediation of social and cultural tools. The understanding of this key notion of mediation is crucial in this study because social and cultural contexts shape how participants talk about their beliefs and influence how they participate in the

current TEP, which subsequently impacts upon their professional identity formation.

Transition

The sociocultural approach to identity formation is based on the idea that an individual's identity is constantly changing (Norton, 2006). Identity formation research uses transition as an important and recurring concept (ibid). In this study, "transition" is considered at two different dimensions: transition from social planes to personal planes, and transition across time, place and status. First, applying the concept of internalisation from SCT, NNSTs' influence on NNSSs' identity formation can be interpreted as a transformation process, transitioning from the social level (interpersonal) to the individual psychological level (intrapersonal) (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). In the current study, influence is viewed as being the progressive movement from the external (social activities that are embedded in TEP courses, mediated by cultural artifacts such as course materials), to internal mediation through participants' recontextualisations of those understandings. The influence of contexts on NNSSs brings a transition in ways of thinking about their professional selves and social practices around their profession. This transition has its social origin in the development of higher mental functioning (Wertsch, 1991).

The second transition type is across time, place and status; here, student participants within the study are undergoing changes in their lives; from one country to another, from one institution (prior working place) to another (TEP in the university), and from ETs to international students. Through these changes over time, space and status in the social contexts in which they engage, NNSSs undergo "transition" in their identities, by means of new experiences coming from their changed institutional, historical and

cultural contexts. In this approach, the basic point is that "identity is about realizing and transforming one's purposes, using signs to accomplish meaningful action." (Penuel and Wertsch, 1995:91).

Context

Much research in line with sociocultural perspectives notes that individuals' identities are socially constructed within sociocultural interactions and relationships (Norton, 2006). Biographical, social, and institutional contexts are important factors for language teachers who negotiate their professional identities (Duff and Uchida, 1997). In this study, contexts are shown to be essential to participants' beliefs and identity formation. Participants have brought their own contexts to the current TEP, including personal developmental trajectories into learning. Here, contexts are not limited to physical boundaries. They go beyond visible social activities such as course workshops, and into participants' past, present and future social and professional spaces. These can comprise personal biographic backgrounds, prior experiences as teachers and learners, the beliefs about the NS construct, or the recognition of World Englishes to name a few. In the present study, participants' sociocultural contexts play an essential role in both shaping their beliefs as reasoning tools to think about who they are, and mediating their identity formation in the course of new social activities. Furthermore, "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relations to the world" are seen as being constructed in socially specific contexts (Weedon, 1997:32). Therefore, the interpretations of participants' thoughts, expressions, and responses are based on the understanding of their contexts. These contexts are the important settings in which people's beliefs and identities are

contested or under which they are transforming (Penuel and Wertsch, 1995), constructed and performed.

2.3 The NS construct

Current estimates claim that about 80% of ETs worldwide are of non-native background (Braine, 2010a). With surging interest in NNSETs as important members of ELT, considerable discussion has taken place for decades about 'the NS construct'. Even though the terms NS and NNS have been extensively used, they remain open to controversy. Many scholars have questioned the notion of the NS, criticising it as being judgmental and evaluative, along with the social, linguistic, economic and political connotations which accompany it (e.g. Braine, 2010; Pacek, 2005). Such notions promote the idea that the ideal teachers of a language are NSs, suggesting that NNSETs are inferior to NSETs. That is, the NS norm, which assumes NNSETs are less able than their NS counterparts, has come under fire.

2.3.1 Current debates on the NS construct

Historically, there has been much more preference for NSs than NNSs as ELT professionals. In 1961, the Commonwealth conference announced that "The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker" (Cited in Phillipson, 1992:185), reinforcing the authority of NSs and the legitimacy of the NS norm. Furthermore, Chomsky (1965) strengthened the place of NSs as the only valid source of language data, by defining NSs as "an ideal speaker-listener … who knows its language perfectly" (p.3). The NS model is supported by Chomskyan linguists who heavily rely on the intuition of NSs for determining grammatical correctness. This belief in the NS model is reflected in many influential books which relate to ELT. For instance, Harmer (1991) assumes that NSs

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provide the target model for language learning in his book. Also, Ferguson (1992) points out that NSs have enjoyed a special place in the linguistic community as the only reliable source of linguistic data.

However, the notion that NSs represent ideal teachers of the language has been questioned and critically scrutinised. Phillipson (1992) calls this "the native speaker fallacy" and argues that what continues this fallacy has no "scientific validity" but sociopolitical motives (p.195). Phillipson (1996) claims that the insights into the language that NSs are supposed to have, such as the ability to determine the correctness of given language forms can be taught to NNSETs through teacher training. He even argues that NNSETs may be better qualified in ELT because they have undergone the same process of learning that particular language. Similarly, Davies (1991) claims that native linguistic competence can be acquired by L2 learners. He denies the notion that native-speakership is a privilege to those who are born to the language and NSs are permanently different from NNSs. Kramsch (1997) also challenges the idealisation of native-speakership pointing out that NSs do not always speak the standardised version of their own language. According to Kramsch (1997), the notion of native-speakership loses its significance and power from the perspective of linguistic migration. That is, these scholars repudiate absolute validity for the NS construct.

Some scholars address the NS construct with reference to the issue of power. Kachru (1997) claims it is a 'linguistic colonial construct', which splits English users depending on the power relations of a colonial world. Also, Nayar (1994) recognises the issue of power. He points out the linguistic imprecision of the NS construct and questions its applied linguistic usefulness. Nayar provides ten defining features of a NS, such as

Dominance, Ethnicity, and Monolinguality. Of all these features, he argues, "Monolinguality" is the only feature which validates the eligibility of native-speakerdom. He criticises the native-nonnative paradigm as being linguistic elitism and an instrument of linguistic imperialism. Pointing out that the implication of NSs' exclusivity of English ownership is politically pernicious as well as linguistically invalid, Nayar claims that the reified myth of NSs should not be allowed to disempower NNSs, and English should belong to everyone who uses it. With reference to the ownership of English, Widdowson (1994) also contests the superiority of NSs, along with the unconditional authority and authenticity that are bestowed upon NSs in language pedagogy. According to Widdowson, the expertise of NSs is incorrectly assumed to extend to their language teaching only because they speak 'proper' English. Widdowson claims that the NS preference is misguided because English is an international language to which no specific nations and therefore no citizens of them can claim ownership. These views of ownership challenge NS superiority as ETs along with the NS construct.

2.3.2 The NS construct's implications for NNSETs

Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) argue that the native-nonnative dichotomy represents a socially constructed identity rather than a linguistic construct. Their argument is based on cultural assumptions about the notion of NSs in terms of socially held characteristics such as national origin and accent. Our social identity comprises our understanding of ourselves and others' understanding of us, and it is the negotiated product of agreement and disagreement (Jenkins, 1996). Also, it is people's social existence that determines their consciousness (Karl Max, 1975, cited in Jenkins, 1996). Hence, the on-going discussion around the mythic nature of the NS construct has significant implications for

NNSETs in terms of how they make sense of themselves as ELT professionals, particularly because its impact on them has been negative, by being directed at 'who they are', not 'what they know'.

Also, the NS construct is important in understanding the identity formation of NNSETs, in that identity involves the person being recognised for who they are (Gee, 2011) and "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world" (Norton, 2000:5). Despite academic doubts about the NS construct, the assumption that NSETs are the ideal teachers of the language remains prevalent among people involved in language education, and even TESOL professionals themselves (Pacek, 2005). Therefore, Nayar (1994) sounds convincing in his point: "Generations of applied linguistic mythmaking in the dubitable superiority and the impregnable infallibility of the 'native speaker' has created stereotypes that die hard" (p.4).

This broad acceptance of the NS construct is challenging for NNSETs, with opposition coming from the professionals and institutions involved in this profession and from their 'non-native students'. Rajagopalan (2005) criticises the current unfair state of employment on the imperialist dimension of the ELT enterprise, which relegates NNSETs to a condition of 'second class citizenship'. Also, it is not uncommon for NNSETs to face biased advertisements such as "Non-native speakers need not apply". In particular, accent, pronunciation and race have been causes of employment discrimination. Lippi-Green (1997) has found that NNSETs are seen as linguistically less competent and less qualified in language teaching than NSETs, based on their 'non-native' accents. Research by Mahaboob et al. (2004) illustrated how the NS construct affects employment in ELT institutions of higher education in America. The study

revealed that more programme administrators than not viewed being a NS as an important criterion. Thus, 'non-nativeness' appears to result in being treated as being less able and less credible in the ELT profession.

However, it is not only professionals and administrators who still believe that native-speakership is a necessary condition for teaching English. The NS construct also finds its way into shaping the beliefs of language learners. "We usually learn to value what we see valued and to undermine what we see undermined." (Thomas, 1999:8). This implies that the NNSETs' marginalisation by students comes from the social context surrounding students and their perceptions of it. Amin (1997) claims that the association of the NS construct and good pedagogy disempowered non-White teachers, who were considered as NNSs on the basis of race. The fact that students challenge who they are may leave NNSETs uncertain of their abilities and credibility (Thomas, 1999). Students' reluctance to accept NNSETs as legitimate language teachers as a result of subscribing to the NS fallacy can lower NNSETs' self-esteems, thus standing in the way of building their sound professional identities. In short, even though the mythical assumptions about NS superiority have been contested for decades (Lippi-Green, 1997), much research indicates that NNSETs struggle to achieve legitimate authenticity as TESOL professionals, and are not given the power and privileged status of their NS counterparts (e.g. Varghese et al. 2005).

2.4 Identity and NNSETs

The discussion about the NS construct above demonstrates how it can be strongly influential on the establishment of NNSSs' professional identities, causing an acute sense of marginalised status in the profession, and even an 'identity crisis' (Braine,

1999). Therefore, in this section, we look at some key studies that demonstrate how the NS construct is connected with NNSETs' identities.

Amin (1997, 1999) directed her attention towards the impact of race, ethnicity, gender and culture on the formation of NNSETs' professional identities. She attempted to explain how the NS construct, in concert with racism and sexism, disempowers minority female NNSETs in their profession. Amin (1997) claims that ESL students' assumptions that only NS teachers (in her study, White teachers) know proper English come from their cognisance of the value of society, which gives them ideas about who is important and who is not. This study suggests that learners' construction of their teachers as NNSs and therefore less able ETs, based on the teachers' race, can have a negative impact upon the teachers' identity formation.

In a study involving foreign-trained immigrant teachers who were enrolled in a recredentialing programme in Canada, Mawhinney and Xu (1997) showed that the issue of the NS construct, which in this research was tied to teachers' races and accents, surfaced as a challenge to NNSETs in the reconstruction of their professional identities. The NNSETs felt that because of the 'nonnativeness' in their accent and race, their bosses and mentors questioned their validity as ELT educators, affecting their confidence and making the reconstruction of their professional identities more difficult.

Sifakis and Sougari (2005) explored the links between teachers' views regarding pronunciation issues and the sociocultural identity of 421 Greek ETs (95% NNSETs). The results revealed that NS norms were predominant in ETs' beliefs about pronunciation. The authors argued that the sociopolitical and intercultural context in

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Greece, where people try to safeguard their mother tongue against 'disparaging' uses by immigrants (in a traditionally monolingual society), seems to affect teachers' beliefs that a "good" accent is a "NS" accent and they are expected to represent the NS norm as ETs. In this study, it is noteworthy that the predominant social values towards languages influenced ETs' beliefs about the NS norms of pronunciation and that those beliefs mediated their teaching practice and professional identities as language teachers. This study showed that the sociocultural environment shapes teachers' beliefs and their identities because they are "members of a group who share a common history, a common language, and similar ways of understanding the world". (Norton, 1997: 420).

These studies illustrate that a linguistically inaccurate and politically damaging native-nonnative paradigm still exists in the field of TESOL (Canagarajah, 1999), affecting NNSETs' professional identity formation. Consequently, the majority of NNSETs need to find ways to establish positive identities as TESOL professionals, which requires them to rise above "their nonnativeness" In the remainder of this section, I discuss the identity theories which have helped me develop an understanding of NNSETs' and NNSSs' identities from the angle of their 'nonnativeness'.

2.4.1 Features of NNSET identity

There are many competing definitions of identity; different literature uses different terminology, such as the self and subjectivity. Although different researchers have conceptualised identity in different ways, most agree that identity is an on-going process of continually emerging and becoming (He, 1995; Miller, 2009). The identity of NNSETs is not static, rather it is negotiated and relational and its formation is socially situated (Norton Peirce, 1995; Kamhi-Stein, 2009). In this study, I define the identity of

teachers as the concept which is closely related to their perception of themselves (e.g. Nias, 1989) and sense of themselves as participants in their social positions and roles (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007). People's identities are multi-faceted, meaning that different people may notice different aspects. Hence, recognition, the role of others, and comparison are the facets that I notice in understanding the relationship between the NNSETs' identities and their social worlds.

Recognition

To West (1992), identity relates to the desire for recognition, visibility and acknowledgement, which are all connected to the distribution of social resources. Norton's (1997, 2000) interpretation of West's idea is that greater access to social resources means more power and privilege, which affects how individuals understand their relationships to their social worlds and their possibilities for the future. That is, people who can access better resources in society are more visible and more recognised. Similarly, Gee (2011) uses social goods to mean "anything some people in a society want and value" (p.5) including power and acceptance, when explaining the relationship between identities and recognition. Whether people are accepted as being good or not is meaningful to them because the distribution of important social goods is at stake (Gee, 2011). That is why people fight over what the rules for being good ought to be (ibid.).

Furthermore, this matter of NNSETs making 'who they are' recognisable is embedded within social situations at different times and in different places, and involves negotiation in actual contexts of practice (Gee, 2011). Thus, the process of how NNSETs identify themselves as professionals involves all those who relate to their teaching and the broad social contexts to which they belong. Being recognised as

legitimate ETs is thus situated and negotiated within social, institutional contexts which reflect the beliefs of those who are involved in their teaching. The perception of being recognised by these people is critical to teachers' professional identity formation. However, in many studies, NNSETs struggle to be accepted as "as good as" NNETs as legitimate language teachers because of the unfairly assumed rules of the NS construct in the practice of ELT (e.g. Amin 1997). The difficulty in obtaining the necessary recognition leads to inequitable accesses to social resources, thus affecting their negotiation of professional identities.

The role of "others"

Identity refers to "'who or what someone is … the meanings attributed to oneself by others" (Beijaard, 1995:282). Although identity can be achieved, it is also assigned and legitimated by others in social contexts (Gee, 2011).This means that the hearer has the power to deny or validate the speaker's identity (Miller, 2009). In, particular, the role of 'others' is significant in negotiating NNSETs' identity. The case of an MA TESOL student in Johnson (2001) is a compelling example. Johnson found that the attitude of people around Marc strongly impacted upon her identity formation as an ET. One recorded statement of Marc's showed how people's perceptions of her which focused on the otherness of her race and language played a role in her identity construction. She explained:

> I start to realize all the LABELS that people put on me … Here I was/am an ESL learner, Latina, Mexican, woman, single, Catholic, student of color, NNEST, minority, Hispanic, bilingual, and I don't know what else … people just label me. (p.20)

The perceptions of the people around Marc influenced her sense of herself and made her conscious of her nonnativeness (Johnson, 2001). As a result, Marc's identity as a young

teacher was defined largely by her status as a NNS (ibid.). Marc's identity as a NNSET was assigned largely from the "outside" – by others based on socially, culturally and politically situated contexts, rather than claimed by herself (Varghese et al. 2005). As such, the perceived non-native identities imposed by others based on pronunciation, accent, or race may prevent NNSETs from effectively negotiating teacher identities (e.g. Liu, 1999), leading to the dangers of increased marginalisation as in Marc's case (Varghese et al. 2005).

In this study, the roles of others are crucial because how NNSSs perceive themselves in relation to those people including their learners, NSs and NNSTs affects the way they perceive themselves and develop their professional identity, especially in terms of their consciousness of nonnativeness. To NNSSs, these others have power in defining their identities or "some of the boundaries of possibility in identity formation" (Miller, 2009:177) because as in Marc's case, identities are often impacted by "what is legitimated by others in any social context" (ibid:173).

Comparison

"The identity of an individual is not fixed but is developed and accentuated by being compared with others." (Tang, 1997:577). Research on NNSETs reveals that the perceptions and images of them are based on comparisons with NSETs. For instance, students' appraisals and attitudes of NNSETs are expressed through comparisons with their NSETs or their experience with them (e.g. Cheung and Braine, 2007; Lipovsky and Mahboob, 2010). Also, Tang (1997) discussed the social identity of NNSETs in terms of their status and power in TESOL, through their perceptions of competency relative to their NS counterparts. Tang based her study on the idea that "the social

identity perspective holds that all knowledge is socially derived through social comparisons" (Hogg and Abrams, 1988:22). That is, people's perceptions of reality are socially structured (ibid.) through social comparisons, and agreement and disagreement on them.

Thus, NNSETs and NNSETs-in-training are reminded of their nonnativeness through comparisons with their NS counterparts. This constantly disempowers them, through the use of binary terms of NS and NNS, discourses around ELT and in TEPs (Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 1999), interactions with NS colleagues, faculty and students (Lippi-Green, 1997; Milambling, 2000), and job advertisements explicitly inviting only NSs to apply (Selvi, 2010). The beliefs that are shaped through comparisons in social contexts are linked to NNSETs' perceptions of their power and legitimacy as ELT professionals. Hence, "comparison" may play a crucial role in NNSSs perceiving their realities and self-images, framing their attitudes towards the specific contexts they are situated in and therefore their constructions of identities as future ELT educators.

Based on these discussions about beliefs and SCT as the theoretical framework and the NS construct and identity theories as background knowledge, this study seeks to fill the gap of research on NNSETs' identity and provide a fresh angle, exploring the NNSTs impact upon the NNSSs' professional identity formation. Next, I explain the research design which the present study employed to achieve this research aim.

Chapter 3 Research Design

In order to describe the research design, first, this chapter presents the discussion of interpretivism as the theoretical perspective, the qualitative case study as methodology and interviews as research methods. Next, I discuss the validation of this study through displaying its trustworthiness and triangulation. Finally, I provide a detailed explanation of data analysis which is based on grounded theory, in terms of transcription and coding procedures along with the ethical considerations.

3.1 Theoretical perspective

In the various ways in which we think about the social world, two different traditions have dominated the history of social science; positivism and interpretivism. The social scientists from these two traditions react differently to the complexities of social research. The social scientists who adhere to positivism believe that the social world they perceive is the one that is 'out there', independent of individuals' perceptions (Greener, 2011) and that knowledge about it can be obtained objectively (Thomas, 2009). From this perspective, the social world and reality that individuals conceive are there to be discovered, and there is little room for interpretations about them.

However, from the interpretive perspective, the social world is not straightforward. There is no objective truth to be discovered because individuals can construct meaning in different ways (Thomas, 2009; Crotty, 1998). If you want to understand other people, you have to understand the interpretations that they give of what they believe and do (Pring, 2000). From this stance, all meaningful realities and knowledge are socially

constructed out of interactions between people and their world, developed and transmitted within social contexts (Crotty, 1998). The interpretivist attempts to understand historically situated and culturally derived interpretations of the social worlds (ibid).

In these senses, this line of approach is closely relevant to the current study in that it explores NNSSs' beliefs and identity formation using a sociocultural approach, which posits how beliefs are socially, historically, and culturally constructed. In this study, construing the participants' world is crucial because the understanding each participant has about the world constructs their social realities in different ways. Also, this study epistemologically aligns itself with the philosophical position that all the ways of understanding are culturally and historically relative and depend on the particular social arrangements (Burr, 2003). Hence this study starts with the assumption that each participant has different understandings and beliefs about their social world, which influences how they perceive and interpret their social realities. The study seeks subjective meanings of participants, in other words, the different understandings and interpretations that the participants bring with them to the specific situation (Pring, 2000).

3.2 Paradigm and methodology

Grounded on this perspective of interpretivism, the present study explores the influence of NNSTs on the formation of NNSSs' identities by asking the following research questions:

1) What are the self-images non-native TESOL students and non-native tutors see reflected in their non-nativeness?

2) What are non-native tutors' and non-native TESOL students' perceptions about being non-native speakers?

3) What are non-native TESOL students' initial perceptions about being taught by non-native tutors?

4) How do non-native TESOL students perceive the presence of non-native tutors as influencing their own identities as future TESOL professionals?

In order to achieve this research aim, this study utilises a qualitative paradigm. This technique is often used when researchers believe that there is no single truth, and it allows them to explore a number of different but equally valid perspectives, because individuals can subscribe to different views (Newby, 2010). The present inquiry would be less suited to a quantitative approach, which emulates the objective procedures and logical deductive reasoning as in the natural sciences (ibid.). The qualitative paradigm is more appropriate for the discovery-oriented, exploratory nature of this research because it offers deep insights into the complexities of beliefs and identity formation and explores up-close information which is gathered by making participants' voices, framed within their social contexts, heard (Creswell, 2007).

For this project I selected a case study in the specific setting of the MSc TESOL programme in the University of Edinburgh. A case study is an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." (Yin, 2009:18). I chose this methodology partly because I wanted to understand a real-life phenomenon of NNSSs' identity formation and NNSTs' influence on it, but also because this technique encompasses historical, sociocultural and

institutional conditions, as they are intertwined with identity formation. Also, qualitative case studies allow researchers to investigate how a set of intricate circumstances come together and interact in constructing the social world around individuals (Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, this can be a useful methodology for obtaining more illuminating insights into complex issues such as identity formation, especially when the research issue is embedded within specific sociocultural contexts.

However, qualitative research and case studies in particular are not free from critical discussions on their potential limitations. First, compared to quantitative research's standardised procedures, their emergent research design may appear to lack methodological rigour (Dörnyei, 2007). Nevertheless, the process-dependence of research decisions is a necessary part of any piece of research (Mishler, 1990). Also, the restricted sample sizes of case studies may lead to a lack of sample representativeness, reducing useful generalisations for others (Thomas, 2009). However, the present study aims "to catch the complexity" of the case in order to obtain an in-depth and holistic understanding of the detailed interactions within the specific context and to gain participants' lived experiences and perspectives (Stake, 1995:xi). Furthermore, this study attempts "to be different things to different people", not "to make the case study be all things to all people." (Flyvbjerg, 2006:238) by preserving the multiple realities that participants bring (Stake, 1995). In terms of looking at these multiple realities, validation is a key issue, and this is discussed in the next section.

3.2.1 Validation

In the current study, since reality is seen as a multiple set of mental constructions, not an objective validity criterion, there can be no ultimate yardstick for justification as

conventional inquirers may claim (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Therefore, from a constructivist perspective, this study claims its trustworthiness based on Mishler's analysis of validation as the "process(es) through which we make claims for and evaluate the "trustworthiness" of reported observations, interpretations, and generalization" (1990:419). Thus, validation in the present research is defined as the social discourse through which the findings of the study are seen as trustworthy for other researchers to make an informed assessment for validity claims (ibid.). Based on these ideas, I claim that a reasonable assessment can be made about the trustworthiness of this study because the process of conducting the study, which aligns itself with what I really did, is clearly visible. That is, this study presents the transparent visibility of the work; of the whole data in the form of audio-tapes and full transcripts available to other investigators; of the method and theoretical framework that transformed the texts used in the analysis into findings; and of the direct linkage between data, findings and interpretations (ibid.).

3.2.2 Triangulation

Furthermore, multiple viewpoints were considered to enhance the validation of this research because another viewpoint or method may encourage researchers to have more confidence in their findings and explanation by corroborating the evidence (Thomas, 2009). The probability that findings and interpretations are found to be more credible also improves if researchers are able to triangulate the collected data by different sources and methods (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This study sought to make findings and interpretations more credible and corroborate its evidence through different sources (multiple accounts from different interviewees). For example, although the student perceptions are the focus of this study, I also used the perceptions and views of tutors to

show variability and compared those of participants as well to provide richer insight into the context. That is, this study viewed things from several directions by offering "multiple copies of one type of source" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:305).

3.3 Method

In order to best answer the research questions, interviews were used for data collection. Even though questionnaires seem to be the most common method of research on NNSETs, they were not employed in this study because the responses may be superficial, limited or oversimplified by the prompts on the questionnaire, especially when the purpose is to discover the multiple views and reveal perceptions that might be suppressed (Brain, 2010b). In this study, interviewing is defined as an interactional social activity in which reportable knowledge is produced and meaning is constructed, which reflects the research topics and participants' biographical information, and which is not merely a neutral conduit for generating them (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004). Interviews are effective ways of accessing participants' perceptions of a situation and understanding their constructions of realities by asking participants to communicate with the researcher in their own words (Punch, 1998). Also, interviewing allows researchers to access the context of individuals' behaviour and provides ways for researchers to understand the meaning of their actions (ibid.). In this study, putting people's behaviour in contexts was paramount because I interpreted participants' beliefs and identity formation through the understanding of their sociocultural contexts.

Interviewing is a flexible mode of collecting information (Seidman, 1998) but there are some limitations that researchers should be cautious about. For instance, obtaining valuable information through interviews requires good communication skills because

there is the possibility that interviewees might try to show themselves in a better light than reality (Dörnyei, 2007; Drever, 1995). Therefore, as a novice interviewer, in order to minimise the potential problems, I made sure to plan carefully for the interviews. For example, two trial runs for student interviews and one for tutor interviews were carried out, which enabled me to ensure that the necessary domains were covered with appropriate question wordings.

In this study, seven interviews were conducted; three tutor interviews each of 40 minutes duration and 4 student interviews each of 60 minutes on average. Each interview was audio-recorded with note-taking to allow thematic analyses of full transcripts; this was discussed with the interviewees in advance. Individual semi-structured interviews were selected because they enabled me to provide both guidance and direction to respondents, but at the same time encourage them to elaborate on certain issues following up interesting development (Dörnyei, 2007). Also, they allowed me to develop broad questions without using ready-made response categories that would limit the breadth and depth of participants' stories (ibid.). This format enabled me to adapt the main questions to suit participants and explore different perspectives in depth allowing the development of new issues identified as important by participants (Drever, 1995). Therefore, I had the predetermined, main questions for all the interviewees, but not necessarily the same wording or order. Additional questions were included with particular interviewees and particular questions which seemed inappropriate were omitted. Sometimes, similar questions were asked in different ways to access deeply underlying reasons of participants' beliefs or discover potential contradictions in their responses. Moreover, based on the idea that interviewing is an interactional process between the interviewer and interviewees, I tried to converse with

participants in such ways that alternate perspectives and considerations came in to play rather than coaxing them into desirable responses by suggesting orientations to diverse aspects of their experience or inviting interpretations that used specific resources and connections (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004).

3.3.1 Sampling

This study employed 'purposive sampling' for student participants, which involves pursuing the kind of person in whom researchers are interested with a focus in mind (Punch, 1998). Four student participants were selected with teaching experience and their teaching background in mind. For tutor participants, all NNSTs (one used as a pilot) on the programme were interviewed. This type of sampling is called a 'non-probabilistic' sampling because it professes no representativeness (Thomas, 2009). However, if the goal is to achieve the richest possible amount of information on a given phenomenon, representative samples may not be the most appropriate because it is more important to illuminate the deeper causes of the phenomenon and its consequences rather than describe how frequently they occur or what its symptoms are (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Also, a relatively small number of participants may generate rich data to provide keen insights into the investigated phenomenon and catch its subtle meanings in well-designed qualitative research (Dörnyei, 2007).

3.3.2 Participants

The participants within this study were three female NNSTs on the MSc TESOL programme and four female NNSSs who were taking courses on the same programme. All were sent an e-mail and agreed on the basis of that. All came from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Teacher1 and Teacher2, from Greece, had learned English

as a foreign language. Teacher3 from France, had learned English as a second language. The tutors were interested in similar academic areas such as multilingualism and multiculturalism. The time in their academic posts as teachers at the University of Edinburgh ranged from 4 months (Teacher1), one year (Teacher3) to 4 years (Teacher2). Teacher1 and Teacher2 had respectively about 6 and 9 years ELT teaching experience. Teacher3 had taught French as a foreign language in the UK for about 10 years. The students were from Taiwan, Lithuania, Korea and Czech Republic and had learned English as a foreign language. All had teaching experience in EFL (English as a foreign Language) contexts. Their experience ranged from 3years in junior high school (Student1), 7 years in high school (Student2), 5 years in primary school (Student3), to 7 years in private language school. Among them, student3 and student4 had prior learning experience in other English-speaking countries, in the UK and Canada respectively. The variation in the personal backgrounds of students such as their countries and prior working institutions was intentional and allowed for valid and meaningful comparisons even though their EFL contexts were the same.

3.4 Ethical considerations

For the present study, the university's research ethical standards were followed. All the participants were anonymised. The assurance of anonymity and confidentiality was particularly important because the supervisor of the researcher was a colleague or tutor of participants. Therefore, the identification of participants was possible only to the researcher, which could empower and encourage interviewees to speak more in their own voices (Mishler, 1986). All interviews were conducted on an opt-in basis and 'informed consent forms' were provided to interviewees. Throughout the research ethical issues were considered during the process of data collection, analysis and

interpretation of the data, reporting of findings, and storage of the data.

3.5 Data Analysis

The qualitative data from the interviews were empirically derived through participants'
narrative rather than theoretically done. The qualitative data analysis was an iterative
process, moving back and forth between data, codes, and interpretation depending on
the emergent results (Dörnyei, 2007). In this study, the data were analysed thematically
employing 'constant comparison' and coded to allow for categorisation of the data
according to emerging themes. Specifically, grounded theory was followed as a basic
analysis frame because of its flexibility in coding, its provision of in-depth
understanding of data (Charmaz, 2006) and appropriateness in producing theoretical
knowledge in areas where little is known about a phenomenon, such as NNSSs' identity
formation (Dörnyei, 2007). In this section, the transcription of the interview data is
presented as the first part of the data analysis process and subsequently the coding of
them will be outlined.

3.5.1 Transcription

Transcribing interviews allowed me to get to know my data more thoroughly (Seidman,
1998). I transcribed the whole data set in written texts after repeated listening to taped-
interviews. In order to minimise the potential loss throughout the transcription process
and reflect the original interview situation fully, much attention was paid to nonverbal
signals, word repetition, language mistakes, pause and punctuation (ibid.). Also, I tried
to keep the 'feel' of the oral communication when transcribing it, because spoken and
written languages are structured differently (Dörnyei, 2007), which may affect the
interpretation of the data. Moreover, it should be mentioned that student3's interview

took place mostly in English but occasionally she spoke a few sentences in her first language, which I translated it into English and clearly mentioned in the transcript. However, this did not affect the analysis of the data because she confirmed the translation later.

3.5.2 Pre-coding

The transcription helped me see the overall picture of my data as one of pre-coding moves by bringing me to a deeper level of understanding (Charmaz, 2006). Before starting to name segments of the data (coding), I tried to make sense of the collected data through repeated listenings to audio-taped interviews, repeated readings of the full transcripts and reflection on them with short notes. These pre-coding moves provided important guidance and direction for coding, shaping my thinking about the data and influencing the way I went about coding them (Dörnyei, 2007).

3.5.3 Initial coding

Following pre-coding, I conducted the initial coding moving through the whole data set mostly line by line (sometimes sentence by sentence) naming almost each line because it allowed me to remain open to theoretical possibilities in my data and catch nuances in them (Charmaz, 2006:50). Throughout the process, the full transcript was read several times, and the data were repeatedly compared with the whole data and codes to find similarities and new emerging ideas. After initial coding, the data were sorted by similarities and separated into categories. During the process, I wrote 'analytic memos' (Dörnyei, 2007) of these categories. These memos helped me explore emerging fresh hunches, ideas and thoughts (ibid.), which were useful to develop focused coding and find themes.

3.5.4 Focused coding

In the focused coding stage, I decided the initial codes which made the most analytic sense to categorize my data completely and incisively (Charmaz, 2006). During this stage, the most frequent initial codes were selected and tested against the whole data. I compared participants' experiences and interpretations moving across the data, identified the most salient categories, developed the focused codes and refined them by comparing them with the rest of the data. In this phase, theoretical integration began. The connections between categories were identified and integrated into more encompassing themes that subsume several categories. Finally, the categories that most captured the essence of the data were labelled as themes, which were then sorted into overarching themes and sub-themes. Throughout the process, the data were repeatedly revisited to find good quotations illustrating the relevant themes and the ideas on 'analytic memos' were elaborated and explored.

By means of the procedures of coding described above, seven participants' interviews were analysed extensively and the data were sorted into emergent themes (See Appendix6). In the following chapter, the findings of this analysis are described in detail in relation to three major themes, demonstrating both the variability and commonality in these participants' beliefs and perceptions.

Chapter 4 Findings

The present study explored NNSSs' professional identity formation by considering the influence of NNSTs on it. To achieve this aim, this chapter answered four research questions based on the findings by discussing the themes with the most direct bearing on the research inquiry. These major themes are:

- Confidence

- Identity

- Fairness

In the discussion of the first theme, 'confidence', the findings showed that both students and tutors displayed confidence in perceiving their nonnativeness although the students' confidence seemed to be unstable because of the influence of changing contexts. Also, it was revealed that the sociocultural contexts shaped the confidences of students and tutors, despite framing them in different ways. The second theme, 'identity', illustrated that students appeared to take on the identities of L2 learners and NNSs in their perception of being NNSs of English, while tutors perceived themselves more as competent bilinguals. However, the perceptions of both students and tutors seemed to be shaped by the explicit and implicit impact of their social circumstances. The last theme, 'fairness', showed that NNSSs perceived non-discrimination in hiring practices and saw future possibilities by detecting equal opportunities in the presence of NNSTs in the current TEP, which provided an understanding of NNSTs' influence on students' professional identity formation. Furthermore, it should be noted that throughout the findings within these three themes, the beliefs of participants, which grew out of their social contexts and evolved along with the changes within those contexts, mediated the

perceptions of NNSSs and NNSTs.

4.1 Confidence

This theme showed how the participants within this study displayed confidence in perceiving themselves as NNS professionals, which is relevant to research question 1. This overarching theme, 'confidence', was explored through three sub-themes linked to it according to what mediated the confidence. The three sub-themes were:

- Power of the contexts

- Influence of transition

- Professional expertise

4.1.1 Power of the contexts

All students within this study demonstrated confidence in perceiving themselves as NNSETs. Their confidence mostly seems to come from the beliefs that they can establish credibility as ETs through other various advantages they hold as NNSETs, which may be more effective means of being legitimate ETs in their teaching contexts as well as replacing 'native-speakership'. The following excerpt demonstrates how student4's confidence was situated in her acute awareness of in Medgyes' (1994) terms, the "bright side of being a non-native". When asked about advantages about being a NNSET, student4 states:

> It can be helpful… because I can focus on the problems they have. I know they have them, the problems based on their mother tongue. So, I know what focus on….and I know their difficult mistakes and common mistakes they make based on their L1. That's an advantage. And I also know how I learned that language. What problems I had…that can help them… It's definitely an approach to someone who knows more languages… and has the experience of learning second language. It's valuable for language teaching. (Student4)

These keen perceptions of their strengths such as their sensitivity to students' challenges and needs, and of sharing students' L1 are echoed in other students' interviews, too. Also, this recognition of their merits appears to allow students to resist the myth of the NS construct. When asked if NSs were better ETs, student3 contested the idea, saying *"If they have better teaching skills or strategies… then they can be but… language teaching is not all about just language…so it's hard to say they are better than me…"(student3)*. The comments' of student4 also share such beliefs, *"Because many of them [NSETs] don't have background in education… and they don't know how to teach…"(student4)*. Thus, none of the students connected the NSs' linguistic competence to their pedagogical ability. As illustrated in these data, the legitimacy and authenticity that appear to be automatically bestowed upon NSETs because of their linguistic expertise (Widdowson, 1994) was contested by students' beliefs that being able to speak excellent language alone does not make people successful teachers and they must be competent pedagogically along with the proper educational background. That is, students' beliefs that professional preparation must not be equated with language proficiency or nativeness (Pasternak and Bailey, 2004) framed their confidence by situating resistance to the absolute value of NSs as ETs.

In addition to students' beliefs about pedagogy, the data also revealed that the public educational system context was another significant dimension that mediated students' confidence. In their prior teaching contexts, students had not been exposed to direct competition with NSETs because they were expected to teach in different subject areas. In those contexts, local teachers were more valued because NSETs had trouble fitting into local educational systems. From the following excerpts it can be inferred that institutional contexts shaped their confidence as ETs.

> But in Taiwan context … It's impossible to hire so many NSETs at school. And they will have a lot of problem if they are hired…… Being a NS in ETs is not necessary. (Student1)

> In my teaching context, there is a native teacher but, they are not … I am the main, a native teacher is not the main, so, even though my linguistic skills and abilities are much lower than them I am not really worried about it. (Student3)

Within student3's context, NNSETs were positioned in higher roles than NSETs, which influenced how she perceived her ability and non-nativeness in being a legitimate ET. The positioning in her institutional context contributed to shaping her confidence as an ET. The social and cultural macrostructure that constitutes her professional world affected the ways she was positioned in her working circumstances (Johnson, 2009), which subsequently framed her perception of herself as a language teacher.

4.1.2 Influence of transition

However, the confidence mediated by NNEST's contexts does not seem to be secure and stable because the changes in contexts through 'transition' in students' time, space and status can bring about 'transition' in their identities making them more self-conscious about their nonnativeness and thereby lowering their self-esteem. For example, the following excerpts from student2 display how changes in contexts, comparisons with NS peers and the existence of 'others' came into play in her perceptions of nonnativeness and weakened her confidence as a legitimate speaker of English .

> Because NSs are around me… When a NS speaks, I feel she or he is better than a NNS because he is fluent in English. They can express their ideas very brilliantly, but I can't. (Student2)

> Constrained… because sometimes I am afraid … being accused of being not fluent… Maybe it's not good feeling… Maybe [NS] tutors don't have such intentions … Of course, they don't say such a problem, English language

proficiency problems… sometimes I don't feel very fluent in front of them…(Student2)

In contrast to her old context in which she had no direct competition with NSs, the new context in which she had to compete with her NS peers as a student made her nonnativeness in her linguistic ability more salient. In particular, in the second excerpt, the fear of looking inferior seems to grow out of the idea that she might not be recognised as a good student by NS tutors because of her linguistic competence. This suggests that her different role as a student assigned by the new context affected the way she perceived herself as a NNS. The excerpts above contradicted the confidence she showed in her other comments, *"For my context, it [my English] is enough. … it's not lack for my learners, I feel, and for me."*(Student2). Thus, the different contexts seem to create tensions in her own confidence about being a NNS, framing her identities in different ways and making them conflict with each other (Gee, 2011). These findings illuminate the fact that how we perceive ourselves is continuously negotiated and settled provisionally because the ways we judge ourselves are embedded in actual situations at different times (ibid.).

4.1.3 Professional expertise

What is interesting in this theme related to confidence, is that despite students' beliefs about their nonnativeness based on their strengths and language proficiency, tutors seem to display different ways of responding about their confidence in perceptions of themselves. Their confidence as NNS TESOL professionals appears to be mostly rooted in their academic knowledge and different ideologies from those of students. Within the excerpt below, teacher3 made it clear that her confidence was grounded in her educational background and professional expertise.

> It might be my education…, because I have a Ph.D. from the UK and experience as a researcher. I think it's all my work experience… it gives me confidence. It's not specially the fact that I can speak English more or less fluently. It's more about I feel I know what I am talking about…basically, it's more content-oriented…not form-oriented… (Teacher3)

In the excerpt above, '… *not form-oriented'* is particularly noteworthy. This demonstrates that her beliefs about nativeness are different from those of students. To teacher3, 'nativeness' is nothing more than a form, not something that is powerfully influential on her self-perceptions. This contrasts with the students' consciousness of the presence of NSs in their new context. Such beliefs are echoed in teacher2's comments: '*I don't think nonnative-speakership is not that big thing. It's just a thing.',* "… *what makes me more confident in my teaching is my knowledge on my subject."*(Teacher2). The tutors' beliefs in their professional expertise shifted the emphasis from 'who you are' to 'what you know' (Rampton, 1990), which shaped their confidence allowing them to challenge NS superiority.

Furthermore, it was evident from tutors' interviews that they were taking on board the idea that English is an international language and it is not exclusively owned by "native-speaking communities" any longer. They challenge the ideology of Standard English and the native-nonnative dichotomy, where NNSs are less competent and their English is deficient. This is illustrated in the following remark, which suggests that English is not owned by NSs and therefore "nativeness" should not be a criterion at least in terms of ELT. Teacher1 states:

> So, now believe it is a matter of practicing, your profession, how good you want to be rather than being a native or nonnative. And one more reason for that, we are not teaching Chinese or French… It's English. English is a now global language whether we like it or not. So, I think we have to stop this divide between NS and NNS and focus on each person's qualities. (Teacher1)

Tutors' different beliefs in 'nativeness' come from their academic expertise constructed through long research experiences and confidence in their professional knowledge, which seemed to frame their ideologies about the NS construct, World Englishes and ELT. These perceptions questioning the NS norm influenced how they saw themselves and subsequently their confidence in the perception of their nonnativeness.

These findings are critical in helping us understand how students and tutors perceived their self-images reflected in their nonnativeness, and helping answer research question 1. It appears that the ways tutors and students made sense of themselves were moulded in different ways. However, it is notable that the social and cultural contexts of both students and tutors seemed to impact upon their perceptions of the nonnativeness because the beliefs which shaped those perceptions were situated and constructed within the circumstances of their work.

4.2 Identity

The second theme focused on how participants' identities as speakers of English were formed and what framed the variability among those identities. This helped answer research question 2, asking participants' perceptions of being NNSs. This theme, 'identity', was explored through the discussion of four related sub-themes. They were:

- Learner identity

- Accomplished speaker of English

- Identity at the policy context

- Bilingual identity

4.2.1 Leaner identity

Students' perceptions of their linguistic proficiency provided insights into their self-positioning as NNSs of English and perpetual L2 learners. Most students saw linguistic deficiency in their English, particularly in the areas of fluency, accent, and idiomatic phrases. This is captured in student3's beliefs: *"Fluency…of course… idiomatic phrases… I think I can understand them, but I don't think I can produce them fluently… Yes, fluency is the most difficult part."* (student3). Most students suggested that their attempts to achieve 'native-speakership' would be on-going but unsuccessful despite their pursuit of NS competence as outlined below:

> I try to improve myself. That part… I will not, I will not definitely reach that level… like just like them, as fluently as NSs … (Student1)

> No, I will never reach his or her level, I mean, in my English language proficiency level. I think it's impossible. … I just learned English maybe ten years. But until now I really don't feel fluent. (Student2)

In the comments above, the word choice of students needs to be noted because it reflects students' identities enacted through language (Gee, 2011). Their lexical choice of "never", "definitely" and "improve" indicates that students portrayed themselves as permanent L2 learners who attempt to achieve NS competence but in vain. Also, these comments imply that students were in the L2 learning trajectory, aiming at NS-like competence and accepted the myth of NS superiority or were affected by it, which imposed upon them the identities of L2 learners.

Despite their confidence in their credibility as well-qualified ETs, their feelings of deficiency in linguistic competence and their unconscious obsession with the NS norm appear to be shaped by the dominant discourses of the superiority of native-speakership,

which permeates their social, cultural and institutional contexts. These powerful discourses inform the beliefs of people involving NNSETs' work, which in turn have mediated their views of themselves as legitimate users of English. This aspect of the data is also captured in student1's comments. Student1 stated how her learners' voices which mirrored the dominant ideology of the society challenged her competence as a speaker of English, thus damaging her identity as an NNSET. She reports:

> Lower than those NSs… Yes. So, this part, when I teach the intonation or pronunciation at least, my students will just make umm, negative comments. "Teacher, you don't sound like a native. Your pronunciation is quite different from the CDs we have." So they will judge you this… a lot of students prefer teachers whose accents are similar to the natives', not very strong Taiwanese accent and they still laugh at you if you have strong accent. (Student1)

The excerpt above indicates that student1's identity was affected by her learners as the hearers, who had the power to deny or legitimate it (Gee, 2011). That is, identity can be "what is legitimated by others in any social context" (Miller, 2009:173). As Medgyes (1994) points out, student1 experienced problems with her professional self-esteem because of the NS construct affecting her learners' beliefs. These pressures from the contexts which use NSs as a yardstick for speakers of English seem to frame her beliefs about NS superiority, at least in terms of accents and pronunciation. Although student1 knows these attitudes are biased (because she used the word 'myth' in her interviews), they seem to make her see the deficiency in her linguistic ability and situate her somewhere in the middle of the continuum of the L2 learning process, as shown in this comment, *"… but still I don't think I have a native accent. This is not British, American or Scottish…"* (Student1). It appears that in student1's sociocultural context, the NS construct is attached to national origin and accent (Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 1999), and this affects the construction of her identity as a legitimate speaker of English.

4.2.2 Accomplished speaker of English

However, there appear to be more individual and contrasting beliefs in this notion of learner identity. Although student4 revealed uncomfortable feelings about her accent, mentioning NSs' reactions to her 'foreign' accent, she demonstrated confidence as a speaker of English, saying that NS-like competence is achievable. When asked if she had achieved NS-like linguistic proficiency, she stated: *"I hope so. It's definitely not the same because you can tell me I am not a NS. But I can do all the things they can do as well. So…"* (Student4). Student4's sociocultural context, where NS superiority is predominant (illustrated in her later interviews) does not seem to influence her identity as a competent speaker of English. Nevertheless, her recognition that she possesses NS-like competence appears to conflict with the institutional discriminatory policy that sees her as a NNS who is less competent than NSs, which is illustrated in the next section. What is interesting here is that student4's case seems to display that professional identity is multidimensional and those dimensions, which can be personal or social, may conflict with each other (Tsui, 2007).

4.2.3 Identity at the policy context

Another aspect that is revealed in this theme, 'identity', relates to the notion that identities imposed by larger social settings seem hard to shake off, restrict NNSSs' roles and marginalise them in their profession. This is aligned with the findings of Morita (2004): when ascribed identities are imposed by powerful beings, they seem to be difficult to overcome. Student3 reported how the Government's monolingual policy which forced the exclusive use of English frustrated her, eroding her confidence as a legitimate speaker and teacher of English. Despite her belief that the policy is based on the wrong assumption which idealises the NS norm in ELT, it seems to affect her

relationship with English making her unsatisfied with her linguistic competence, as displayed in this comment: "*Oh, my students will be satisfied but I am not…*"(Student3). Consequently, she situated herself in the position of a perpetual learner pursuing the 'unreachable NS competence' which her institutional context requires.

The institutional policy context driven by the NS norm appears not only to ascribe a NNS identity but also to impact upon the choice of future career path. Although student4 was confident enough to believe that she had achieved NS-like competence, the discriminatory policy of her institution, under which NNSETs got lower salary than NSETs regardless of other educational backgrounds, forced her to take on a NNS identity. Consequently, student4 chose to obtain her Master's degree in a TEP held in an English-speaking country because her long-term exposure to the NS academic community would be valued in her working circumstances, if not as much as NSs. These two cases suggest that NNSSs' identity formations need to be understood in terms of larger and often inequitable sociocultural and institutional structures which frequently assign them identities such as learners or NNSs. Thus identity can be understood as the relationships between an individual and the social world, which are mediated through institutions including schools and workplaces (Norton, 2006). Also, they suggest that identity construction needs to be understood with respect to the relations of power operating through larger social processes, just as the one between the institutional policies and their members is (ibid.)

Notably, although the students were aware that they had an adequate level of linguistic proficiency to perform their teaching, most perceived that their language proficiency was deficient and needed to be improved. This is because their contexts assigned most

value to NS competence making NNSSs at best the second best thing. It seems that the sociocultural contexts of students' professional lives which are represented as the government policy, and people's attitudes largely shape their beliefs in the NS norm, which in turn mediate how they perceive themselves as speakers of English and how they construct their professional identities.

4.2.4 Bilingual identity

However, in contrast to student views, tutors saw themselves as legitimate bilingual users of English repudiating the discourse which describes Standard English as the only legitimate form of English and therefore validating NS as the only worthwhile norm. Tutors' ideologies about World Englishes and the native-nonnative dichotomy seemed to influence the way they perceived themselves as confident speakers of English. They did not pursue the identity of a NS, as is evidenced in the following comment, *"Who is a native speaker? Is there such a thing as a native speaker?"* (Teacher1). In contrast to students, they did not view themselves as permanent L2 learners. Tutors appeared to see themselves as close to the definition of "balanced bilinguals who are approximately equally fluent in two languages across various contexts" (Baker, 1993:8). The excerpt below gives an insight into teacher3's bilingual identity as a legitimate user of English.

> I mean it's a difficult concept because I would think for me English is my first language because it's the language I use everyday at work. … That means many things. More comfortable… I work in English, think in English, conceptualize ideas in English… In French… I have now reached in more the level of second language to me. So, these things are not fixed, basically. (Teacher3)

Teacher3 has a clear idea that English is more than L2 in her current situational context. In effect, she accorded English the status of first language. She even pointed out that she was using English as a thinking tool conceptualising for things, which is the fifth

language competence proposed by Skutnabb-Kangas (1981, cited in Baker, 1993). It seems to be evident that her working circumstances mediated her relationship with English and in turn influenced the way she saw herself in that language. The professional context appears to be significant in framing her bilingual identity as part of the broader sociocultural and political context (Tsui, 2007). This influential dimension of personal, social and cultural contexts on tutors' bilingual identities is echoed in the following comments from teacher1. She stated how the period of time for which she stayed and immersed herself in the present context shaped her perception of herself as a user of English.

> Well, but I think I've been lucky enough to live in this country for years now, over 12 years now. So I am very much used to it. For me, it is a second nature. I don't have to think about it. I am not struggling, to an extent, I don't feel in terms of my identity I don't feel I am Greek, something like half and half.. I wouldn't say English Greek, something that has to do with English, for the English language any way. (Teacher1)

Obviously, the fact that teacher1 has lived in the current context for a long time interacting with local people, exposing herself to and penetrating the local culture has made an important difference in shaping her perception of herself. As teacher1 reported in her interview, her familiarity with the country, its culture, her current cultural and its social contexts have played a role in making her feel confident as a competent bilingual.

The analysis of these data is important in understanding the tutors' and students' perceptions about being a NNS, which is the aim of the second research question. These findings indicate that participants' notions of identities are interlaced with their beliefs formed by language, culture and social interactions. Yet, it is worthwhile to note the differences in the ways the contexts frame their beliefs. Students' beliefs seemed to be shaped by their passive response to their social and institutional contexts, namely, the

acquiescent acceptance of the inequitable public discourses permeating their circumstances such as NS superiority. In contrast, tutors' beliefs appeared to be formed by their active roles in teaching practice and by being lively participants in their living communities. It seems that while NNSSs' learner identities were largely ascribed by their contexts, NNSTs' bilingual identities were enacted through their contexts. These socially situated identities which students and tutors took on were differently negotiated in actual contexts of practice (Gee, 2011).

4.3 Fairness

This theme presented participants' perceptions of the presence of NNSTs in the current TEP, which provided an understanding of NNSTs' influence on students' professional identity formation by answering research questions 3 and 4. In this section, the theme 'fairness' was explored through two relevant sub-themes:

- Equality and future possibilities
- Non-discrimination in the working place

4.3.1 Equality and future possibilities

This is a complex issue in terms of equality and discrimination. However, interestingly, students paid more attention to this theme than tutors. Although most students did not expect that they would be taught by NNSTs because the programme is held in an English-speaking country, students saw the presence of NNSTs in the programme as positive and encouraging, because they felt it indicated fairness. This perception is obvious in student4's comment: "*I think it's perfect. Because they are not discriminated based on the fact that they are NNSs of English.*"(Student4). Also, student1 considered their presence as a supportive sign for future TESOL professionals because she believed

the diversity of faculty members showed that other qualifications were more valued than native-speakership in hiring practices. Such beliefs were shared in this comment from student3:*"... that means nativeness is not the first one... they are hired by their qualifications and career rather than nativeness..."*. (Student3).

Another insight into how contexts shaped students' shifting beliefs is highlighted below, indicating that beliefs may not be fixed. The following narrative is particularly interesting in that it demonstrated how student3 saw fairness in the diversity of tutor constitution and how the new context has reshaped her beliefs and learning through the contrast with her prior experiences in a TEP in Canada which had only NS tutors.

Stuents3: When I was in Canada, I've got feedback after practicum … … I felt, it's unfair… But at that moment I didn't think it's unfair because I have not had experience what I had here… their feedback was very harsh to me… because their perspective was that ELT could be good only if teacher's language proficiency is as perfect as NSs….even though they didn't tell it explicitly. But I could see that…

Researcher: Did you feel that they saw you inferior to them?

Student3: Yes…That's why I felt their comment was very harsh, which upset me very much... But, here I realized that that was not necessarily true… I mean about linguistic things… and there is no need to be as perfect as NSs to be a good ELT teacher.

Researcher: Did you feel that the methodology which would fit NSETs better was forced to you?

Student3: In Canada? I didn't realize that … at that time. But now I feel that way…

Researcher: You mean the programme at the university of Edinburgh actually provide you something different from the one in Canada, especially in terms of tutors' diversity?

Student3: Yes, I can say that. Even though ELT and TESOL educating would be different, but I definitely realize that language teaching is not only about nativeness…

Researcher: Do you think the presence of NNSTs in this programme could be one of the factors make you think that way?

Student3: Yes, I think so. Their presence kinds of confirms that the things I've learned in linguistic courses… not just theories from head…

Again, student3's belief about fairness is echoed here. She seemed to believe that in

contrast with the former TEP, NNSTs' presence in the current TEP meant that she could be evaluated without prejudice regardless of her nonnativeness. What appears to be apparent within the data presented above is that her new experiences reconstructed student3's beliefs about nonnativeness and her legitimacy as an ET. As reasoning tools, these newly constructed beliefs reframed her way of perceiving herself and helped her discover her voice as a legitimate ET. Her new context allowed her to take a critical approach to the old ideology, contest it and shape a new one which influenced her new professional identity construction. These comments are noteworthy in that they display how she had an investment in the current programme beyond the simple perception of non-discrimination in the work place. They demonstrate how she used the current TEP, particularly, in terms of the diverse constitution of tutors, to explore and reconstruct her beliefs about ELT as well as to situate her new identity formation. This narrative illustrates that the sociocultural contexts in which the learning happens and the individual's prior experiences determine what is learned and mediate how individuals take in things (Johnson, 2009).

In addition, students' perceptions of fairness appear to be connected to their realization of future possibilities in the profession. The future possibilities they saw are highlighted in the comments of all the students: For instance,

> I didn't think about the possibilities to work in this environment … find and seek a job… But they are examples which are very encouraging and changed my understanding about teaching…Because now I believe NNS teachers can be a perfect teacher even in this English speaking environment…, which I didn't expect at all. (Student2)

In these comments, she suggests that her new context reconstructed her beliefs in ELT and framed her new confidence as a NNSET making her see possibilities in her future

career which she did not expect in her old circumstances. Student2 appears to see chances of equal opportunities in the competition with NSs because she mentioned she would have a problem in competing with NSs in international job markets in her other comments. These perceptions are echoed in the other students' interviews. The presence of NNSTs appears to reshape the way students understand their relationship to their social world and their possibilities for the future by detecting equal opportunities in the field of TESOL. Given that identity is about "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world … and how that person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2000:5), these findings provide in-depth insights into how the presence of NNSTs influences the professional identity formation of NNSSs by answering the research question 3 and 4.

4.3.2 Non-discrimination in the work place

In contrast to students, only one tutor mentioned this issue. Teacher3 saw fairness in her work place (the present TEP), as reported in her comment:*"I don't feel discriminated for being French… I mean, otherwise, why I am employed here…"*. This belief appears to be framed by her personal experiences of teaching French as a foreign language in the UK. Her prior working contexts, in which she was considered a NS of French, might influence her positive beliefs about equality in hiring practices. In fact, she stated that she believed NNSs are not discriminated against just because of their nonnativeness. Interestingly, it appears that the current context reinforced teacher3's beliefs about fairness in hiring practice, while it drew changes in the students' beliefs about it. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the context was a critical parameter in framing both students' and teachers' beliefs although it operated in different ways.

The exploration of these three themes gave an insight into the identity formation of NNSSs through providing an understanding of the relationships between participants' beliefs and their perceptions of themselves as NNSs and the presence of NNSTs. Also, the findings revealed that students' identities were mediated by their conscious or unconscious beliefs which seemed to be constructed out of their sociocultural contexts. Yet these beliefs were not static, because the changing contexts could shift them. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the individual notions of the shared beliefs provided evidence that people construct their knowledge in different ways and bring subjective understandings and interpretations to their situations (Pring, 2000). Therefore, capturing how each participant interpreted experiences and discourses situated in their contexts was significant in the analysis of these data (Mishler, 1990). Based on these findings, in the following chapter, the main outcomes of this study and their implications are discussed in depth.

Chapter 5 Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss the primary results of this study - which focus on three main themes - and their implications for TEPs and future research on NNSS's identity. These outcomes are highlighted here because they help me answer the research inquiry, which was to understand NNSSs' professional identity formation by explaining the nature and crucial parameter of NNSSs' identity construction and suggest significant implications which should be considered to promote the positive identity formation of NNSETs-in-training as ELT professionals. The two main outcomes to be discussed are: 1) The NS construct is a significant parameter for NNSSs' identity negotiation, and 2) Identity formation is a situated and dynamic process.

5.1 The NS construct as a site of struggle

This study, first, illuminated that the NS construct was a significant parameter in the NNSSs' professional identity formation as being "a lived reality" (Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 1999:429) in their contexts. This outcome is reminiscent of the work of Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) which showed that the NS construct was a site of struggle for NNSETs. In the present study, even though students showed confidence as NNSETs, close examination revealed that this confidence which came from recognition of their strengths as NNSETs was rooted in the ideology of the opposed identities of NSs and NNSs and the assumption that English belongs to NSs (ibid.). Moreover, although being fully aware that they were endowed with the privileges of bilingualism (Kramsch, 2003), NNSSs perceived themselves as permanent L2 learners rather than competent bilinguals because the social judgement that affected their beliefs and perceptions of themselves was based on the idealised NS norm. As such, if not willingly, students took on imposed identities as permanent learners and NNSs, which subsequently made their self-

confidence as ELT professionals contradictory and vulnerable to changing contexts.

Thus, the NS construct was not only at the centre of students' identity formation but a site of struggle in terms of achieving their legitimacy and authenticity as teachers and users of English, as illustrated in previous research (e.g. Varghese et al, 2005). This outcome suggests that to develop positive identities as legitimate teachers and users of English, NNSSs should overcome the conventional ideologies of the NS construct. Given that TEPs are sociocultural contexts in which students are working for their professional credentials and by which their professional identity along with their beliefs is framed, they should provide students with opportunities to establish credibility as ELT professionals by offering alternative discourses to counter the NS construct which disempower them. In the remainder of the section, I suggest the alternative discourses which TEPs may provide to help NNSSs overcome the NS construct and to empower them.

5.1.1 A sense of ownership of English

The findings of this study on NNSTs' confidence and identities as NNS professionals may offer some specific directions for TEPs. Tutors repudiate the validity of the NS construct and believe in World Englishes which challenges Standard English, having a sense of ownership of English. Standard English is the symbolic possession of a particular community, not simply a means of communication, being expressive of its values and identity (Widdowson, 1994), thus leading to disempowering NNSs who do not belong to that particular community. Therefore, seeing English as a global language that belongs to an individual user from all racial, ethnic and national backgrounds would empower NNSSs as TESOL professionals and speakers of English (Pavlenko,

2003). This idea would enable students to overcome the native-nonnative paradigm and the implicational NS-exclusivity of ownership of English. By virtue of possessing that language and turning it to their advantage, NNSSs would achieve real proficiency of it (Widdowson, 1994). This would allow them to see themselves as accomplished users of English rather than permanent L2 learners.

5.1.2 The notion of expertise

Tutors also believe that a successful language teaching should be grounded on teachers' expertise, which is connected to Rampton's (1990) idea. This notion of expertise emphasises what they know, not who they are, suggesting that ethnicity and nationality are not the same as language ability (Rampton, 1990).This idea of expertise, which is learned, dynamic and not innate (ibid.), can be an effective way for NNSSs to resist the NS norm prevalent in their historical, institutional, and social contexts by developing their identities as ELT experts instead of suffering from inferior identities as less able counterparts of NSs. Here, the role TEPs can play, as Golombek and Jordan (2005) suggest, is to support NNSSs to develop aspects of their ELT expert identities, like their command of pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge of their learners' needs and institutional demands that various teaching contexts require.

5.1.3 Critical awareness of local contexts

These alternative discourses such as a sense of ownership of English and the notion of expertise would empower students as ELT professionals by challenging the validity of the NS construct and offering new positive identity options. However, the NS construct would operate in different ways in different local environments depending on their historical and sociocultural backgrounds, thus resulting in imposing different demands

and restrictions on NNSETs. Therefore, this study argues that the discourse for empowerment should also be about "analyzing ideas about the causes of powerlessness, recognizing systemic oppressive forces" (Lather, 1991:4) and suggests that TEPs provide opportunities for NNSSs to foster critical awareness of their contexts: the constraints the contexts impose upon NNESTs because of the NS construct permeating them, the sociocultural and linguistic demands NNSETs must meet and their positionality in teaching contexts. If prejudiced negative identities of less competent speakers and teachers of English are ascribed by the social construct of 'nonnativeness', the construction of positive identities means deconstructing the social values, attitudes and beliefs assigning them (Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 1999). Hence, fostering the ability to recognise inequitable beliefs imposed by sociocultural contexts and to deconstruct them would enable NNSSs to make more informed decisions about establishing their legitimacy as ETs in their working settings.

5.2 Situatedness of identity negotiation

Another main outcome from the findings is that negotiating identity is a situated, dynamic, and contextualized social process. This result is echoed in the research of Morita (2004), who investigated students' discourse socialisation processes. In this study, NNSSs negotiated and enacted different identities in different contexts, whilst undergoing transition in identities over changing contexts. That is, the local, interpersonal, historical, situational, cultural and social contexts were inseparable from their identity construction. These contexts framed identity formation by shaping how participants perceived themselves through their beliefs contextualised within those contexts. In particular, the sociocultural lens that this study used highlighted that the negotiation of NNSSs' identities was impacted by their contextual factors: sociocultural

values, the attitudes of people, government curriculum policy, TEPs, and unequal financial treatment policy of institutions because their beliefs, which fashioned their identity development, were constructed in ways that were historically, culturally and socially embedded in the specific contexts (Johnson, 2009).

5.2.1 Implications for TEPs

This outcome that identity formation is dynamic, contextualised, and situated has significant implications for TEPs because they are also crucial contexts which mediate NNSSs' beliefs and identity construction. In the present study, the TEP of the University of Edinburgh, in itself, became the important social discourse for framing NNSSs' perceptions about themselves, their relationships with the social world and the future possibilities for their careers as NNS professionals as well as to reshape their beliefs about ELT and their positionality in it. That is, the NNSSs were situated and negotiated their professional identities within the TEP. The findings of this study showed that the NNSSs were still grappling with the traditional ideologies and their new context, and the present TEP played an important role in shifting changes in those beliefs. The case of student3 is a compelling example to illustrate how powerful the influence of TEPs can be as social environments to frame students' beliefs, ultimately leading to new identity options. Through a critical approach to the old and present TEPs, student3 deconstructed both the old ideologies about ELT which she believed were based on the NS construct and her less competent identity as a NNS which she felt was imposed from outside. This allowed her to reconstruct her self-perceptions and ideas about ELT and construct the new relationships with the social realities by discovering new possibilities as a NNS through the diversity in faculty members, which enabled her to legitimise alternative linguistic theories. Thus, TEPs are the sites in which students

construct, deconstruct and reconstruct their identities as future ETs. That is, in TEPs, an important 'transition' into a professional identity takes place through the process of their professional growth. Hence, as important contexts which mediate students' beliefs, TEPs are responsible for co-constructing the professional identities of NNSSs.

Furthermore, NNSSs are expected to teach in different countries and confront different expectations and more importantly will be affected by the different values and beliefs of social settings in which they operate (Kamhi-Stein, 2009). Based on this premise, TEPs need to be sensitive to various local contexts and address how these contexts contribute to shaping students' beliefs and the formation of their professional identities. In particular, given that the sociocultural contexts surrounding NNSSs are powerfully influential on their beliefs and identity formation, TEPs should help them foster their ability to recognise, challenge and demystify the biased conventional constraints and ideologies - such as the NS norm imposed by their surroundings- with counter-ideologies, act on those social environments, and reframe inequitable public discourses such as their learners' beliefs.

5.2.2 Implications for future research

This second outcome has important implications for future research on identity as well. It suggests that the research on NNSSs' identity formation should consider the various contexts in which they were, are and will be situated. Without the consideration of these contexts, a decontextualised approach would not provide in-depth accounts for the situated nature of identities. Also, the contextualised analysis of the data revealed that for the exploration of the situated nature of identities, it is crucial to consider how beliefs are created, fashioned and evolve within the involved contexts because beliefs

embedded in them impact upon the ways that NNSSs perceive themselves and build a sense of professional selves. For instance, without understanding student1's beliefs about accent which were situated in Taiwan sociocultural values, it would have been difficult to construe why she perceived herself as a permanent L2 learner rather than a competent bilingual despite her confidence as an ET. Also, students' perceptions about being NNSs differed depending on their beliefs rooted within their contexts. Hence, future research about identity formation needs to pay more attention to participants' beliefs and the relationships between the social environments and those beliefs.

In sum, these two main outcomes of this study shed light on the development of NNSETs' professional identities and suggest potential future directions that TEPs and future research can take to support the positive identity formation of NNSETs-in-training. In addition, based on this discussion, lest the multicultural richness, resources and contributions of NNS professionals be wasted, the field of TESOL must promote all the ideas which are suggested in this study.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Drawing on a sociocultural approach, the present study aimed to understand NNSSs' professional identity formation, in particular, the potential influence of linguistic and ethnic diversity of TEP faculty members on it. The findings showed that the presence of NNSTs exerted a positive influence on students' self-perceptions as NNSs and their professional identity development. It allowed students to discover new relationships with the social world and see equal opportunities for their future career, by detecting fairness in hiring practices. More notably, based on the reported data, the results of the study appear to cast light on the larger picture of NNSSs' professional identity construction beyond the influence of NNSTs. The analysis of the data revealed the complex but significant dimensions of identity formation, being conducive to understanding NNSETs' complicated identities. The results demonstrated that students were not free from the NS construct and were still subject to the NS superiority fallacy despite their high sense of self-esteem as ETs. Also, the results highlight the situated nature of identity formation and the importance of mediating roles of contexts and suggest that the process of building professional identities should be understood as a socioculturally interactive process in the wider picture of contexts rather than a purely individual and psychological process.

In particular, a sociocultural perspective employed as a theoretical lens allowed me to move beyond simple descriptions of identity formation processes and see the inherent complexities of the relationships between participants' beliefs and their social contexts, thus enabling me to trace the ways that the beliefs were fashioned and ultimately led to the mediation of identity formation. Therefore, this study suggests that a sociocultural approach to identity research would provide future researchers with explanatory power

by enabling them to capture the rich contextualised details of identity construction. Also, based on the ideas of the situated nature of identity formation and the mediating roles of contexts in identity negotiation, TEPs should be able to provide NNSSs with the opportunities to take a critical approach to ideologies and public discourses surrounding ELT in their contexts as well as offering counter-ideologies and discourses to challenge the inequitable systems that their sociocultural settings and working environments impose (Golombek and Jordan, 2005).

Finally, the present study investigated the process of NNSs' professional identity development and the factors which might impact on it. However, this study focused on NNSSs' and NNSTs' voices. Including the voices of NS students and NS tutors not only would expand the scope of future research but would help reveal more tensions, complexities and contradictions involved in the process of NNSSs' identity formation in that "inequitable hierarchies are an issue that should be addressed not only within the marginalized group but also within the profession as a whole." (Pavlenko, 2003). Furthermore, given the richness of the data the current study presented, more longitudinal case studies of NNSSs would provide far more illuminating insight into their professional growth and identity formation.

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