Research Study

The Story of Two Female Native and Non-Native TESOL Instructors: A Duoethnographic Look at Convergent and Divergent Language Teacher Identities

WILLA BLACK, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

ALEXANDRA KRASOVA, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT. The two authors are white, female, middle class, multilingual, and are pursuing their Ph.D. degrees at a university located in western Pennsylvania in order to become TESOL instructors. However, we have one major difference: one of us is a native English speaker while the other is a non-native TESOL instructor. In this duoethnography we focus on how the assigned (and often adopted) identities of English NS and NNS affect how our identities are formed and how we conceptualise them. Moreover, we lean on art-based research methods as a way to build identities and transfer them into the classroom. We find that assigned identities and binaries affect us even in TESOL programs and that art-based research can lead to important discussion.

RÉSUMÉ. Les deux auteures sont des femmes blanches de la classe moyenne, multilingues, et sont toutes deux étudiantes doctorantes dans une université située dans l'ouest de la Pennsylvanie pour devenir des enseignantes de l'anglais, langue seconde (TESOL). Cependant, nous avons une différence majeure : l'une de nous est de langue maternelle anglophone (NES) tandis que l'autre parle anglais en tant que langue seconde (NNES). Dans cette duoethnographie, nous nous concentrons sur la façon dont les identités assignées (et souvent adoptées) de NES et NNES affectent la façon dont nos identités sont formées et comment nous les conceptualisons. De plus, nous nous appuyons sur des méthodes de recherche basées sur l'art pour construire des identités et les transférer dans la salle de classe. Nous constatons que les identités et les binaires attribués nous affectent même dans les programmes TESOL et que la recherche basée sur l'art peut conduire à une discussion importante.

Keywords: *teacher identity, art-based research methods, native/non-native speakerism, TESOL.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of English Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) teacher identity and the complexities related to it is not new and has been well researched in the field (Kayi-Ayder, 2019). However, we still know little about how art-based research methods—that is, using artistic processes in order to understand and articulate the subjectivity of human experiences which reflect cultural and social values and beliefs that impact language teachers' identities—help instructors build their identities (Ewing & Hughes, 2008; Leavy, 2020; McDermott, 2002).

Varghese et al. (2005) describe teacher identity as ''a profoundly individual and psychological matter because it concerns the self-image and other-image of particular teachers'' (p. 39). Teacher identity is social because, being a fundamental process, it takes place and develops in institutional settings. Moreover, teacher identity is a crucial element in how language teaching is applied in the classroom. Considering their positionality, their relation to students, and the contexts in which teaching is applied, instructors can implement various strategies. Thus, understanding of a teaching and learning process depends on understanding of a teacher identity (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 22).

Instructors have to overcome many challenges and difficulties inside and outside the classroom. Some of them experience social and professional marginalisation, while others are marginalised because of their position as non-native speakers in a language teaching environment (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 23). Social identity might shift and become more complex (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 37), but the label "non-native speaker" does not change: once a non-native speaker, always a non-native speaker. Thus, we aim to examine the construction of our native versus non-native identities using the duoethnographic method. We also use art-based research methods to prompt discussion, as we feel it can be an important tool in classrooms and for professional development.

EXIGENCE OF THE STUDY

This article aims to address the issue of the NEST/NNEST and NS/NNS dichotomies through the lens of similarities rather than differences. While not directly addressed here due to the limited scope of this article, through our conversations we have discussed our shared experiences with the sexism and ageism that accompany being a young woman in academia. Both of us come from stable, middle-class families that value education, and both have studied and taught abroad, both in our native and nonnative languages. Indeed, even in our physical appearance we are similar. These similarities have allowed us to focus more closely on the shifts in our identity that come from how our peers, students, colleagues, and administrations have viewed us due to our national and linguistic identities.

LANGUAGE TEACHER IDENTITY (LTI)

Yazan (2018) describes teacher identity as ''teachers' dynamic self-conception and imagination of themselves as teachers, which shifts as they participate in varying communities, interact with other individuals, and position themselves (and are positioned by others) in social contexts'' (p. 21). This definition enlarges our understanding of

LTI by bringing up interaction with other people. So, for example, teacher identity can affect language learners' developing identities—and vice versa. However, this definition does not reflect how our LTIs are influenced by society and how they are viewed by others. For instance, it is challenging for instructors to meet the expectations of different schools possessing certain cultural norms (Byrd Clark, 2016, p. 6), especially if those norms differ significantly from their background experiences. As Lee and Canagarajah (2019) point out, there is ''the need to understand teachers' lived experiences as a pedagogical resource that shapes teacher identity beyond their knowledge in and about language teaching'' (p.353).

Exploring language teacher identities helps to understand and shape classroom practices (Varghese et al., 2016, p. 566). LTIs are flexible and fluid ; being fluid, ''identity work involves *practising*, rather than *mastering,* ethical self-formation'' (Miller et al., 2017, p.93). The 1997 study described by Duff and Uchida in Kayi-Aydar (2019) indicated that teachers' identities are shaped by their background educational and cross-cultural experiences, and, according to the particular context, they constantly negotiate their identities (in Kayi-Aydar, 2019, p. 285). For example, if an ESL/EFL instructor is not aware of local practices, it might be quite challenging to transfer the cultural and social aspects of language to students. We must look at language as a practice that reflects the social and cultural sides of life, rather than as a structure that is quite abstract (Pennycook, 2010).

NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKERNESS IN ESL

It is challenging to be in the profession for instructors whose identity is different from the one defined ideal (Zheng, 2017). For instance, the study conducted by Choe and Seo (2021) demonstrated that no matter how effective non-native teachers are, they are still regarded as underqualified English instructors whereas white teachers are perceived as the most qualified (p. 6), and ''job interviews and postings for academic and foreign language teachers demand 'native speakers' or speakers with 'native to near-native proficiency'' (Byrd Clark, 2016, p. 11).

Amin (1997) argues that positioning teachers according to their linguistic status makes them negotiate their teacher identity ineffectively, which demonstrates that non-native-speakerism influences the instructors' identity formation (in Kayi-Aydar, 2019, p.286). This could possibly be because their assigned teacher identity, defined in this study as the identity that others perceive and then enforce on a teacher, varies so wildly from their chosen identities, or the identities that the teachers have adopted and feel for themselves.

To conclude, Zheng (2017) defines a "translingual teacher as someone who is able to embrace and integrate his/her multiple linguistic identities as he/she becomes a teacher'' (p.32). However, understanding and developing translingual identities is impossible without an instructor's reflection on the correlation between identity and approaches used in the classroom (Zheng, 2017).

ART-BASED RESEARCH PRACTICES

Nonnative English-speaking teachers (NNEST) bring linguistic complexity into the classroom while using translanguaging and code-meshing (Varghese et al., 2016). Diversity existing in multilingual classrooms, including racial identities, language backgrounds, sexual and religious identities, and institutional contexts, ruins ''the hegemony of the West'' (Varghese et al., 2016, p. 565).

Dispositions play an enormous role in teaching languages since they guide how instructors implement their lived experiences in their pedagogy as well as how they perform the language (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019), which means that teachers ''can develop their translingual competence'' (Lee & Canagarajah, 2019, p. 353). Lee and Canagarajah argue that instructors should develop approaches facilitating students' translingual dispositions in the classroom so that ''they can question and negotiate monolingual norms and ideologies'' (2019, p. 361).

Art-based research practices support TESOL instructors and their students because they reflect cultural and social aspects of language learning which are essential parts of plunging into a foreign language. Instructors should think not only about what knowledge they transfer, but also about how knowledge is constructed and transferred, i.e. their teaching methodology. For instance, using art-based projects in the classroom means to accept and praise learners for implementing their individuality in their works, supporting the stance that the truth is multiple and the world is diverse.

For multilingual learners who possess various backgrounds, art-based pedagogy provides an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge instead of describing it. Art-based pedagogy gives students an opportunity to use various modes of communication while creating and discussing their works, thus infusing a range of views and supporting diversity in a multilingual language learning classroom.

Additionally, engaging students with art-based projects (and participating themselves) would help instructors explore their own identities, as it would encourage the reflexivity essential for examining the relationship between learners and language teacher identity (De Costa & Norton, 2017).

RESEARCH METHOD AND LIMITATIONS

Duoethnography

This study is a duoethnography, which is defined as a methodology "in which two or more researchers of difference juxtapose their life histories to provide multiple understandings of the world" (Norris & Sawyer, 2012, p. 9). As part of the duoethnography model, the researchers are also the participants, and the data we present is in the form of scripted dialogues between the researchers that represent the ideas and debates they engaged in over the course of many hours of conversation and reflection. While duoethnography is not a traditional form of research, we believe that this method allows for long, complex conversations and multiple sources of reflection to be synthesised into a more comprehensible, clear, and readable form. (Lawrence & Nagashima, 2020). It also allows for aspects

of the participants' voices to be retained. This method was chosen because it "allows researchers to explore their hybrid identities and to see how their lives have been situated socially and culturally" (Sawyer & Norris, 2012). The researchers chose this method because of its emphasis on crucial differences between the participants, which is especially salient in this case as the researchers move beyond similarities to focus on their experiences as an American NEST and a Russian NNEST.

As a duoethnography, this study is highly contextualised, and cannot be generalised to larger populations. In addition, this study focuses mainly on linguistic identity, and as such cannot be extended to other aspects of language teacher identity. Finally, these narratives are only representative of the experiences of the researchers, and it is acknowledged that each person will have their own unique narratives. As a result, these stories should not be taken to represent people with similar backgrounds to the participants. Rather, they are meant to spark reflection and debate among readers.

AIMS OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

It is important to draw attention to the power that the NEST/NNEST binary still has on language teachers and their identities, despite recent research that pushes against the binary. Scholars such as Canagarajah (2011) and García and Lin (2017) assert that language is neither so compartmentalised nor so simple, and that the idea of the native speaker is complicated by people who grew up speaking multiple languages, as well as the fact that there is no single set form of a language, but rather many different forms, with one lauded as the "standard." Nonetheless, most language teachers today grew up with the idea of NEST and NNEST, and the effects of that belief must be examined, particularly its long-term effects on language teacher identity. By examining the experiences of the researchers/participants in this study, both of whom have very similar assigned identities, and the differences in their experiences as assigned NEST and NNEST, this research aims to answer the question:

1. How have the researchers' experiences and their assigned identities as a NEST and NNEST affected their projected and chosen LTIs?
2. How do their assigned and internalised identities as NEST and NNEST demonstrate the current state of the NEST/NNEST binary?

Alexandra Krasova is a doctoral candidate from Russia, studying and teaching at a university in western Pennsylvania. She has taught in both public and private sectors at school and university levels in Russia, the UK, and the USA. She identifies as a transnational instructor, as she teaches English, Russian, and French across those countries. As a researcher focusing on TESOL pedagogy and digital storytelling, she is interested in multilingual identities and their incorporation into digital stories. Alexandra identifies as a Russian female. She has been living in the United States to study and teach for more than two years and over the period of data collection has been working in a public university in the USA for two years.

Willa Swift Black is a doctoral candidate from rural Pennsylvania. She has taught in the public school system as an ESL tutor and an English language instructor in both American and South Korean contexts. She is fluent in English and Spanish and has studied in both the US and Spain. She identifies as a translingual with particularly strong skills in English and Spanish. She has a strong interest in language teacher and language learner identities, particularly in their development over time and how those aspects of identities interact with each other and with different contexts.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected over a four-month time span in which the researchers held many conversations, originally as part of a class but later out of genuine curiosity, and wrote and collected reflective journals. We decided that important, recurring questions and issues would be written down and discussed, both via asynchronous writing that we read and through in-person, recorded conversations. These conversations were recorded via Zoom and were then transcribed with the help of Zoom's transcription feature.

For both researchers, their experiences as native and nonnative speakers in the various countries and contexts they had lived in were central. For Willa, her first experiences abroad and as an English teacher defined by her employers' and colleagues' ideas of what and who a NEST was were central. For Alexandra, the main focus was on her non-native identity and attempts to overcome the assumption that a NNEST is less qualified than a NEST. Finally, as part of these discussions, each researcher created a small piece of digital art in which they selected images which reflected their assigned LTI and their self-perceived LTI. These pieces, which were strongly influenced by culture and personal history, became centrepieces of discussion.

Participants' Biographies and Positionality

In many ways, we are very similar, particularly from an outside view. Both of us are young, white females from middle-class backgrounds. We have similar levels of education. We both entered into the Composition and Applied Linguistics program at the same time, and as cohort members we had many classes together. At the time of this study, both of us were in our final semester of coursework in the program, and were entering into the wider world of academia. Both of us have had experiences abroad as teachers and students. However, as an American from a rural area of the country and a Russian from a large population centre respectively, we have had wildly different experiences due to our nationality and our "native language."

Alexandra

Language has always played an important role in my life, as has the identity of a "teacher". I was born in Kazakhstan, where I was exposed to two languages: Russian and Kazakh. However, since my family had to leave Kazakhstan when I was three, I lost my ability to speak Kazakh language. I started learning English when I was eight, and it became my favourite language. I loved everything about it: the sound of the words, the rhythm of the sentences, the grammar structure, and the complex structure of its language system. By the time I entered college, I could speak English fluently, and I started learning French. I already knew that I wanted to be an English teacher. Studying

in France and England, I never stopped learning and teaching English. My desire to improve my pronunciation and develop my vocabulary made me apply for a scholarship and come to the U.S., where I consequently decided to apply for a Ph.D. program.

Willa

My mother was an English professor (now retired), and some of my earliest memories are of playing in the living room while listening to my mother recording cassette tapes with comments on her students' papers. My mother, like my father, emphasised the importance of learning other languages and cultures, and signed me up for Spanish clubs and classes and ordered language learning videos for me to watch. In fact, they were the only videos that I was allowed to watch while I was grounded, which was a common enough occurrence that I ended up being able to repeat the entire series word for word within a year. I went on to learn phrases, vocabulary, and anything that I could of every language that I came across, bolstered by my parents' encouragement and funding for tutors. By the time I went to college I was certain that I wanted to be a language teacher, although I went back and forth between a desire to be an English teacher and a Spanish teacher. I went on to get an MA TESOL degree, teach in South Korea, and enter into the Composition and Applied Linguistics program.

Our varied language practices and experiences allowed us to be where we are: both aiming to be English instructors. And yet, in our conversations, we discovered that we are not in the same place due, to being labelled as either a native or a non-native teacher.

DIALOGUES

Dialogue 1: Language as Property
In this dialogue we examined our individual experiences, with language being viewed as property with native speakers as the owners.

> Willa: I remember that when I was in high school I went to Spain for an exchange program. We were walking through a plaza when two Spanish women walked by and one loudly and viciously exclaimed, "I can't believe they [a group of Romany women] are speaking *our* language!" I was shocked. Up until that point, my teachers and my parents had always treated language as a skill and an art, something that anyone could use with practice. I had never witnessed people saying that others couldn't use their language like that.

> Alexandra: When I went to France when I was younger, I had an experience like that, too. I was told that because I was a non-native speaker that I would never sound like a native speaker, and that I would never know all of the cultural things that people who grew up in that language do. But it's so unfair, because no one knows everything in their language. Like, if you ask me about anything in science, I'm not interested,

so I couldn't tell you anything even in Russian. And I might not know some cultural aspects, but is that really necessary to be able to speak a language?

Willa: I've heard that, too. I mean, there isn't even one culture for a language. I grew up in a rural area in the foothills of the Appalachians. The culture I grew up knowing is completely different from the culture of someone who grew up in a city in California. And I remember getting into good-natured arguments with my friend from England about the meanings of words and comparisons of our culture. So there isn't even one culture to know.

Alexandra: Exactly! Culture changes so much from place to place, but people see culture as owning a language. Like, this language is my culture.

Willa: I really don't even think that language can be owned. It's a skill and an art, and it's really difficult to own a skill. That said, this ideology has been around for so long that it's part of the culture that claims ownership. And on a larger scale, people argue that English should not be owned, but that doesn't solve issues of native-speakerism and language ownership in other languages, like French, Spanish, or Korean.

Alexandra: People want to own it, though. It falls into their picture of a language and what it means. And that's why it's so important to, you know, teach a language after learning another language. So that you know the struggles people face, and that fight that they have to enter. We owe it to our students, especially when teaching a language like English.

Willa: Right, it's different for English because of its political power. Like, I've experienced being a nonnative speaker with Spanish and Korean, but people always treated it like they were extra languages, not essential ones. I was never outwardly seen as lesser for not knowing them in the big picture, but my students or my colleagues had to know English or they were seen as less. It's like English is given a greater value, which means that being a native speaker is seen as even more important when speaking English. Alexandra: I agree. It's like, English is necessary for many universities and degrees, but I'm never seen as good enough because I'm not a native speaker, so it feels like I don't belong in the academy. I am treated differently, and my English is always seen as weaker, and people always ask me if I understand, even though I am in the same classes with the same level of education as the other native students. They are not asked about understanding academic texts or their writing the same way. My assigned teacher identity is always less because English is not my first language. I have to deal with this everywhere.

This discussion exemplified the similar views that both Willa and Alexandra hold about language ownership, as well as the similar experiences that exposed them to the idea that language can be owned. In Willa's case, she had never thought of language as a thing that could be owned, because her focus had been on language as a skill that can be used. Alexandra expressed a similar ideology, focusing on the specific knowledge domains within a language. Her justifiable anger at being told that she will never be able to be like a native speaker and never know enough about

a culture underscores the idea that only people with a certain background are viewed as legitimate owners. Both Willa and Alexandra are against this idea, stating that there are distinct cultural differences even within the same country, and that there is so much to know within any one language that no one could know all of it.

While both participants experienced similar shock at their first experiences seeing a language being viewed as property, there are some key differences. Willa's first experience came from witnessing discrimination, while Alexandra was told directly that she could never achieve the same linguistic competency as people from France. Additionally, Alexandra was expected to reach mastery in English to perform her job, but that mastery was constantly questioned. Willa, on the other hand, had her other languages treated as extras, or like bonuses on top of her English. Meanwhile, Alexandra revealed that she often felt excluded or out-of-place in the academy due to the constant questioning of her English. This demonstrates that while both Willa and Alexandra are already in more vulnerable positions as young women in academia, the addition of linguistic bias affords Willa a more stable position than Alexandra, regardless of their actual linguistic skill

Dialogue 2: Experiences Abroad

In this dialogue we discussed our experiences as both students and instructors abroad. As we talked, we discovered that our experiences were more similar than we had initially expected, even though our contexts were continents away from each other and in very different levels of education. We delved into the wide reach of the NEST/NNEST binary, and how our experiences seemed to be different sides of the same coin.

Alexandra: I remember when I was teaching in the UK people would always ask me if I understood what was being said. They would speak slowly or try to speak in a simpler way, like I was not as smart as I am. I would tell them that if I didn't understand I would ask them what they meant, but they still did this. It happens here, too. It's like, I am in a Ph.D. program in English in America, and I already have a Masters in English. It is my job to have mastered English, but people still either speak like I do not understand English or constantly compliment me on basic English.

Willa: I had a similar experience. In Spain people would always treat me like I was not as intelligent or like I was younger than I was. I could easily understand them and communicate, but they just didn't seem to believe it because I was not a Native Speaker. Then when I was teaching in South Korea every part of my teaching was determined by my native speaker status. I was only allowed to use English to teach speaking, listening, reading, and writing; I was never allowed to use any Korean in class, even when my students really needed that Korean to aid in understanding, especially my kids who were absolute beginners. My entire assigned teacher identity was determined by nationality and native language, because the administration and parents had this view that only native speakers could ever truly speak and write correctly.

Alexandra: Yeah, this issue with nationality is something that I encountered on the job market! I was applying to a job teaching English in Mexico before I came here, and even though I had all of the main qualifications and the interviewer said I was a good fit, she told me that she couldn't justify hiring me to

her bosses because I was not from one of the "native" English speaking countries. I realised then that I would not be seen as a qualified teacher because of where my passport comes from.

Willa: It was the same in South Korea, and I was so surprised by that country list! It made me so angry on behalf of my students. I mean, right from the start we are telling them that they will never truly master English because they were not born in one of seven countries. They pick up on that, and it makes learning English seem hopeless. Why learn it if you can never have a say in it and never be considered good enough? I tried to counteract this, but I was one voice against a nearly global obsession with native speakers.

Alexandra: It is everywhere, like here in the US and in Mexico, too. And in France. It's surprising that even in countries where English is not the national language people are judged for not being native speakers. Maybe especially so.

Willa: Yeah, I hadn't heard of that passport rule here. And I mean, the native speakerism issue was everywhere I looked abroad, even for other languages like Spanish or French. People only wanted to hire teachers from a country that speaks that language, and because English was such a popular subject, or I guess required would be a better way to describe it, the issue seemed to be magnified for English teachers. And it was like having that passport was enough to get you employed, and everyone just assumed that it was why I got the job.

Alexandra: Yes, this was my experience from the other side. I was qualified in every way, except my passport did not come from the right country. I was more than proficient enough in English for the position, but the administration would not believe that. And it seems to be more the administration than the other teachers, because the teacher who interviewed me said that she knew I would be a good fit, but that it was the administration who would not look past my NNEST identity. It's like, all of the progress we have made in the field does not count when not talking to people in the field itself.

Willa: I saw that, too, particularly with parents. The parents wanted their children to learn from native English speakers, so the administration agreed.

Alexandra: Exactly! It feels like now that much of the field acknowledges our worth, that is good, it's great, but until administrations and businesses and the rest of the world agrees, being labelled as a nonnative English speaking teacher will always be seen as a bad thing, and as a teacher I will have to deal with that. This is not going to change quickly, so we have to keep talking about this and not let this progress disappear as we interact with more and more students, you know? As teachers, we have to hang on and keep fighting, because this is not a thing of the past, it's still happening, in the US and in Mexico and in the UK and other places

Here, Alexandra was turned away from a job that she was qualified for because of her nationality, demonstrating that the idea of inner-circle nations still holds a great deal of power (Clarke, 2009). This realisation cemented the

idea that her path as an English teacher would be made more difficult because of her nationality, regardless of what skills and qualifications she has. Willa also felt as though she was completely defined by her nationality and speaker status and what the administration thought that qualified her for. Their assigned LTIs narrowed the range of teaching and employment opportunities.

Both Alexandra and Willa struggled with their assigned identities and the vast difference between how they were viewed and how they viewed and valued themselves, and both felt hopeless against this ideology. Alexandra accepted that there was no way to change the minds of administrations, at least as one person. Willa tried to raise her students' confidence, but felt that her influence was drowned out by the culturally elevated status given to native speakers in many places in the world. They came to the shared conclusion that while the academic world largely acknowledged issues of native speakerism, the rest of the world, particularly the administrations and stakeholders of schools, were not as quick to change.

Dialogue 3: Digital Art Discussion and Language Teacher Identity

This dialogue discusses the pieces of art that Alexandra and Willa brought to demonstrate their assigned and chosen teacher identities. The researchers chose to use this approach to visually conceptualise their identities both as they understand them and as others view them. This not only allowed them to better represent their point of view, but also to reflect on their own understanding of themselves as they searched for or created pieces of art, which was inspired by the work of Leavy (2020). The images chosen or created are shown in Figures 1 to 4 below.

Figure 1: How Society Views Alexandra Being Multilingual and Possessing Multiple Identities

Figure 2: How Alexandra Views Herself Being Multilingual and Possessing Multiple Identities

Figure 3: How Society Views Willa Being Multilingual and Possessing Multiple Identities[1]

---

[1] Image from Dahle, T. (2009). Mercator versus Peters projection: Why change is a difficult process. Dahle Communication.
https://dahlecommunication.typepad.com/home/2009/10/mercator-versus-peters-projection-why-change-is-a-difficult-process.html
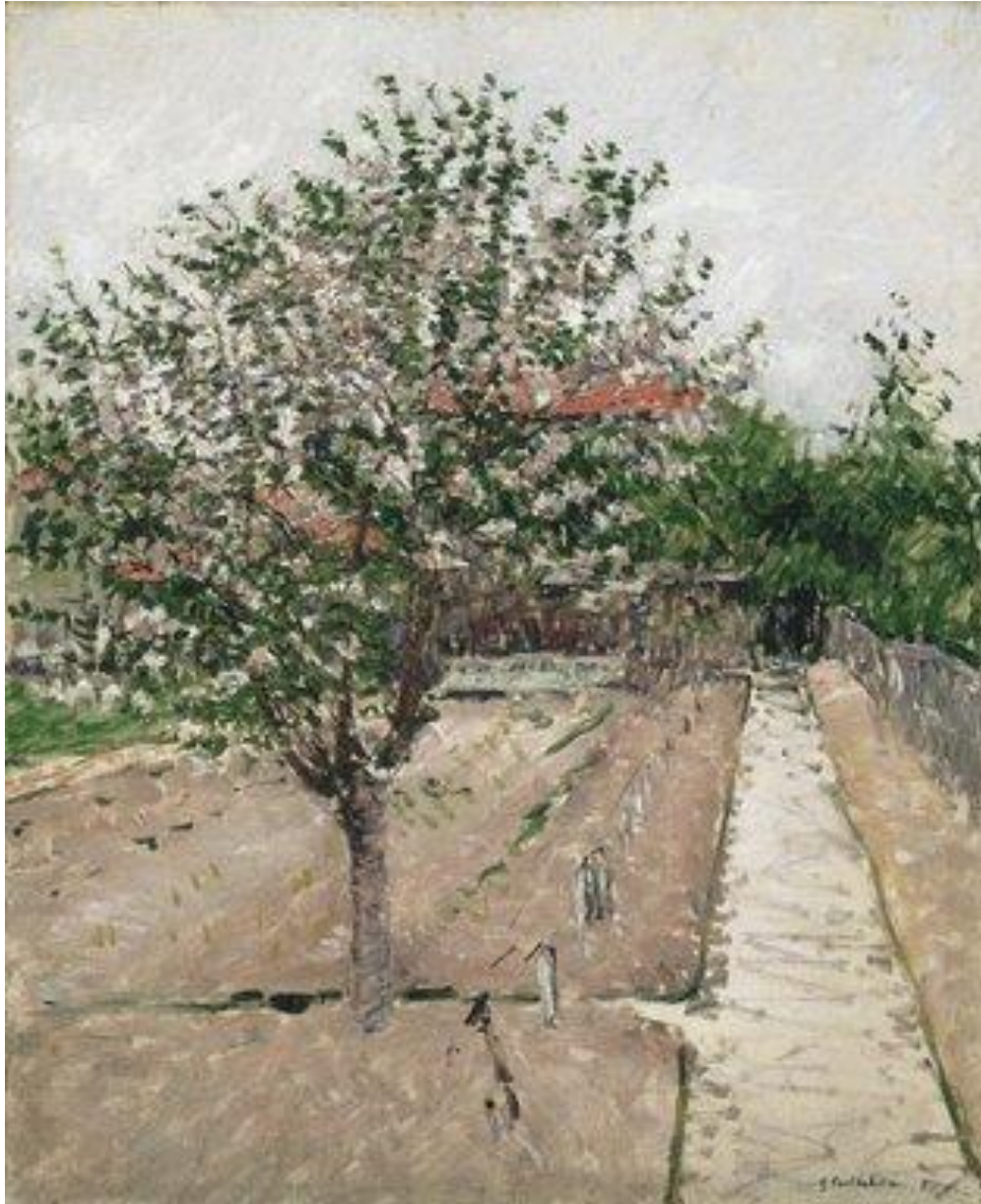
Figure 4: How Willa Views Herself Being Multilingual and Possessing Multiple Identities[2]

---

[2] Art by Gustave Caillebotte. (1885). *Apple tree in bloom* (Pommier en fleurs) [Oil on canvas]. Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York, USA.

The images demonstrate similarities between both of their identities, although they have markedly different ways of displaying them. As artistic representations, the connection to NEST and NNEST identity is not as clear. Rather, the subjective nature of art required explanation and dialogue (two crucial teaching and learning activities), and thus both researchers circled back to their linguistic identities, emphasising their importance to their overall language teacher identities.

Alexandra: Yes, so you can see that my pictures are divided by colour. In the first, there are very clear lines between identities and languages.

Willa: Oh, this is really cool! So these are the languages that you identify with?

Alexandra: Yes! I speak Russian, English, and French. But in this first one, it is really clear that I am more Russian, and that these identities are clearly separate. That is how people see me. The Russian part takes up nearly all of me, so everything else is seen as less important. It shows how everything important comes from that Russian identity and the Russian language. It also is in the order of my languages, but you know, this doesn't even make sense when you think about it because I go to school in English and I live in America and I teach English and I write in English, but they always see the Russian first.

Willa: That makes sense, especially with all of the clear cut, even lines. And your second picture looks a lot more blended, and I see that the colours are in different places. Could you explain it?

Alexandra: In the second picture I show how I see myself. Those different languages and identities blend together. There are no clear lines, and it all comes together to form me. And you can see that there are different colours in my head showing that I think in many languages and ways, you know? And it's more evenly distributed and spread out, and colours mix together because my languages are not separate, you know? They all mix together and I don't think in only one or switch what I'm doing, they're all there and all mixing and all part of me and they make new colours and new parts of my identity. I mean, people see me in a simple way, and my real identity is so much more complicated than what people see. What about your pictures?

Willa: So, my first picture is actually the world map that I grew up with in American schools. It literally splits Asia in half to keep the US in the centre.

Alexandra: Really? That's so strange.

Willa: It is! But this is what I grew up with, and this is how I feel people see me. It's like they will cut apart other parts of my identity, my other languages and cultural experiences, just to focus on the fact that I'm an American NEST. That's why I chose this picture; it shows this cultural aspect that I grew up with and was taught, that the US is the centre of everything in our worlds, and seeing this in every history and geography

textbook I had until college just drove that idea home in a subtle way. And when I was teaching abroad, it was like they split apart other important parts of my identity to fit what they saw me as.

Alexandra: That's a strange thing to do to a map. I see what you mean, though, that this is pushing that idea of America being more important to the children who look at it. What about your other picture?

Willa: Well, my other picture is a painting of an apple tree. This is partially because I'm really fond of paintings in this style and of nature and trees, but also because I love the symbolism. Trees spread out in many directions, but their roots spread out at the same time, and it's all connected. When people look at trees they know that they have roots even though they can't see them, and that's how I see myself. I have this part that I let people see, but I also have these roots that form my foundation, and even when they are not visible they are always there. I also chose this painting because of how you can see these separate strokes of colour which also often blend together, just like how my experiences are distinct, but blend together and layer to make up my identity.

Alexandra: I get that. It's like everything is important to your identity, not just one part. Mine is similar, I think, because the pieces people see are still there, but they just didn't think about how they blend and how the picture comes together.

DISCUSSION OF THEMES

Theme 1: Language as Property
As demonstrated by the dialogues, two main themes emerged from our data. The first theme focused on language as property, which is in agreement with previous literature exploring native-speakerism (Cheo & Seo, 2021; Clarke, 2009; Lee & Canagarajah, 2019). Clarke (2009), for example, asserted that the ownership of language is a frequent barrier for language users, particularly those who do not match what society would picture as a native speaker due to race or nationality. Both Willa and Alexandra experienced this, but from opposite sides. Both Alexandra and Willa pointed out that a given language is not only a skill rather than a physical, ownable object, but also varies widely from group to group even within the countries that speak it. This aligns with Clarke (2009), who asserted that there are many forms of English even within the USA, pointing out AAVE, southern dialects, and more. In this case, the importance placed on English, and particularly the ownership of English, was clearly displayed in the differences in experiences between Alexandra and Willa.

Theme 2: The Importance of Nationality
Another theme that emerged was the importance of nationality, in particular the social and political power that comes with a passport. In TESOL, seven countries are recognized internationally as having English as their native language. For Willa, this worked in her favour as her passport came from a recognized country, while Alexandra was turned away from a job she was well-qualified for because of her Russian passport. This emphasis on nationality

above skill is a long-standing issue, as asserted by Clarke (2009) and Ellis (2016). As a native speaker, Willa was never questioned about her language ownership or linguistic skill, but both her colleagues and her students were held to an impossible standard because they were not from an inner-circle nation. This caused conflict in Willa's LTI because she felt that she was unable to protect her students from these unfair standards, stating, "Why learn it if you can never have a say in it and never be considered good enough? I tried to counteract this, but I was one voice against a nearly global obsession with native speakers." On the flip side, Alexandra was constantly questioned and infantilized when teaching, working, and studying abroad because of her nationality and her resulting categorization as a NNEST. This affected her interactions with her peers and placed her in a less powerful position, as she was constantly treated as though she did not understand the material being discussed without any thought for her existing qualifications and skills. As she stated, "It is my job to have mastered English, but people still either speak like I do not understand English or constantly compliment me on basic English." This reflects previous findings from studies like Ellis (2016), Varghese et al. (2005), and Wolff and De Costa (2017), showing that native speakerism is still a pressing issue, even with decades of studies and scholars calling for change.

IMPLICATIONS

Implications from this study move us toward both research and teaching/learning practices. We would like to share implications for further dueothnographic approaches and arts-based learning.

As we wrote the dialogues for this study, we were confronted with an interesting problem: how to accurately portray the voices of each participant, particularly when each uses a slightly different variety of English. Even when discussing academic topics, both Willa and Alexandra were prone to use more casual language, and often inserted slang. Alexandra also has a distinct manner of speaking, as she translanguages with Russian. Willa has a tendency to ramble when excited. It was important to represent our unique backgrounds and ways of expression, particularly because it can be easy to aim for grammatical correctness and erase our linguistic differences. This is an important issue to explore in future duoethnographies: how to protect the linguistic authenticity of participants as the synthesised conversation is created.

Much research has been done in the ELT field, and many researchers have paid attention to the issues of gender, whiteness, sexuality, native-speakerism, and social status (Amin, 1997; Wolff & De Costa, 2017). Duoethnography is a recent form of research, but it adds to what is traditionally used, not just by sharing stories, but also by mimicking the kind of discussion that expands knowledge in a field and by modelling what we would like to hear in student discussion. We hope that, with this methodology, our voices will be heard and understood as a way towards power equality in an ELT society, which would allow us to focus on teachers' qualifications and experience rather than native-speakerism.

The use of art-based learning practices does not need to be reserved for students; they can help teachers understand and explain their relationships to complex ideas and structures as well. The simplicity of an assignment like the one we gave ourselves allows learners to move swiftly to thoughtful and illuminating discussion. It can be

a powerful form of professional development as well, and comparing visual or metaphorical responses to assignments over time can help us better understand our process of identity formation

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

While this study examined NEST and NNEST identity in multiple contexts, there is still much more work to be done on how graduate programs form communities and interact with NNES students. As noted in the study, graduate programs can inadvertently infantilize or insult NNES students in an attempt to ensure that they understand the course work, so more research into how programs can avoid this while still providing necessary support should be investigated. In addition, the identities assigned to both NESTs and NNESTs should be examined, particularly as they first enter the workforce and establish their identities. In addition, this article calls for further research on the efficacy of art-based learning/teaching in multilingual classrooms as a way to develop and better understand our identities as opposed to a traditional role of memorization. Finally, more research should be done into the various effects of gender, race, sexuality, and religion on NEST and NNEST identities.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alexandra Krasova is a PhD student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA. Alexandra is fluent in Russian, English, and French, and has studied German and Arabic. She has lived and taught in the USA, France, Great Britain, and Russia.

Willa Black is a PhD student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA. Willa is fluent in English and Spanish, and has studied multiple other languages. She has lived in the US, Spain, and South Korea, and has taught in both the American and South Korean school systems.

REFERENCES

Amin, N. (1997). Race and the identity of the nonnative ESL teacher. *TESOL Quarterly,* 31*(3),* 580-583.

Byrd Clark, J. (2016). Transdisciplinary approaches to language learning and teaching in transnational times. Introduction to the special issue. *L2 Journal, 8*(4), 3-19. http://repositories.cdlib.org/uccllt/l2/vol8/iss4/art1/

Caillebotte, G. (1885). *Apple tree in bloom (Pommier en fleurs)* [Oil on canvas]. Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York, USA.

Canagarajah, S. (2011). Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(3), 401-417. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01207.x

Clarke, M. (2009). The ethico-politics of teacher identity. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 41*(2), 185-200. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2008.00420.x.

Choe, H. & Seo, Y. (2021). Negotiating teacher identity: Experiences of Black teachers of English in Korean ELT. *English Today, 37*(3), 148-155. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0266078419000531

Dahle, T. (2009). Mercator versus Peters projection: Why change is a difficult process. Dahle Communication. https://dahlecommunication.typepad.com/home/2009/10/mercator-versus-peters-projection-why-change-is-a-difficult-process.html

De Costa, P., & Norton, B. (2017). Introduction: Identity, transdisciplinarity, and the good language teacher. *The Modern Language Journal, 101*(1), 3-14. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12368.

Ellis, E. M. (2016). "I may be a native speaker but I'm not monolingual": Reimagining all teachers' linguistic identities in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly, 50*(3), 597-630. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.314

Ewing, R., & Hughes, J. (2008). Arts-informed inquiry in teacher education: Contesting the myths. *European Educational Research Journal, 7*(4), 512-522.

García, O., & Lin, A. M. Y. (2017). Translanguaging in bilingual education. In O. García, A. M. Y. Lin, & S. May (Eds.), *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, pp. 117-130. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404513000304

Jeongyeon, K. & Young, S. (2020). Negotiation of emotions in emerging language teacher identity of graduate instructors. *System, 95*, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102365.

Kayi-Aydar, H. (2019). Language teacher identity. *Language Teaching, 52*(3), 281-295. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444819000223

Lawrence, L., & Nagashima, Y. (2020). The intersectionality of gender, sexuality, race, and native-speakerness: Investigating ELT teacher identity through duoethnography. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 19(1), 42-55. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2019.1672173

Leavy, P. (2020). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice* (3rd ed.). Guilford Publications.

Lee, E., & Canagarajah, S. (2019). Beyond native and nonnative: Translingual dispositions for more inclusive teacher identity in language and literacy education, *Journal of Language, Identity & Education 18*(6), 352-363. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2019.1674148.

McDermott, M. (2002). Collaging Pre-service teacher identity. *Teacher Education Quarterly, Arts-Based Research and Teacher Education, 24(4)*, 53-68. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23478451.

Miller, E. R., Morgan, B., & Medina, A. L. (2017). Exploring language teacher identity work as ethical self-formation. *The Modern Language Journal, 101*(1), 91-105. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12371.

Norris, J., & Sawyer, R. D. (2012). Toward a dialogic methodology. In J. Norris, R. D. Sawyer, & D. Lund (Eds.), *Duoethnography: Dialogic methods for social, health, and educational research*, pp. 9-39. Taylor & Francis Group.

Pennycook, A. (2010). *Language as local practice*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203846223.

Sawyer, R., & Norris, J. (2012). *Duoethnography*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Song, J. (2016). Emotions and language teacher identity: Conflicts, vulnerability, and transformation. *TESOL Quarterly, 50*(3), 631-654. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.312.

Varghese, M., Motha, S., Park, G., Reeves, J., & Trent, J. (2016). "In this issue [of TESOL Quarterly, on language teacher identity]. *Special Themed Issue for TESOL Quarterly, 50*(3), 545-571. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.333.

Varghese, M., Morgan, B., Johnston, B., & Johnson, K. (2005). Theorizing language teacher identity: Three perspectives and beyond. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education, 4*(1), 21-44. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327701jlie0401_2.

Wolff, D. & De Costa, P. (2017). Expanding the language teacher identity landscape: An investigation of the emotions and strategies of a NNEST. *The Modern Language Journal*, *101*(S1), 76-90. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12370.

Yazan, B. (2018). A conceptual framework to understand language teacher identities. *Journal of Second Language Education, 1*(1), 21-48.

Zheng, X. (2017). Translingual identity as pedagogy: International teaching assistants of English in college composition classrooms, *The Modern Language Journal, 101*(1), 29-44. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12373.