

TESL Teacher Educators' Professional Self-Development, Identity, and Agency

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Using the concepts of identity and agency, this Perspectives article discusses my recent efforts of self-development when designing an identity-oriented Teaching English as a second language (TESL) teacher education course around teacher candidates' semester-long autoethnography writing assignment called "critical autoethnographic narrative" (CAN). It specifically unpacks the ways I negotiated and enacted my identities of teacher educator and researcher of teacher education while I was incorporating identity as the main goal in teacher candidates' learning. In closing, this article offers recommendations for TESL teacher educators who consider designing identity-oriented courses and suggests some future research directions.

À l'aide des concepts de l'identité et de l'agentivité (ou capacité d'agir), cet article de Perspectives illustre mes récents efforts d'autoperfectionnement alors que je concevais un cours de formation d'enseignantes et enseignants d'anglais langue seconde axé sur l'identité, et ce, autour de l'imposition d'un projet d'écriture autoethnographique d'un semestre appelé « exposé autoethnographique critique » à des candidates et candidats à l'enseignement. L'article révèle spécifiquement la façon dont je suis parvenu à négocier et faire valoir mes identités de formateur d'enseignants et de chercheur en éducation d'enseignants alors que je faisais de l'identité le principal objectif de l'apprentissage des candidats et candidates à l'enseignement. En terminant, cet article offre des recommandations à l'intention des formateurs d'enseignantes et enseignants d'anglais langue seconde qui songent à concevoir des cours axés sur l'identité, et ce, en plus de proposer des orientations futures en matière de recherche.

KEYWORDS: teacher educator self-development, identity, agency, critical autoethnographic narrative

Introduction

The line of research on identity in Teaching English as a second or other language (TESOL)/applied linguistics was spearheaded by Bonny Norton's (1995) seminal work, and it was mostly focused on the important role of learners' identity in the process of language learning and use. This was later followed by studies on language teachers' identities, and there is now an established strand of research that seeks to understand language teacher

identity in relation to varying aspects of teaching practices and surrounding sociopolitical and cultural discourses and power relations (Faез, 2012; Varghese, Motha, Trent, Park, & Reeves, 2016; Yazan & Rudolph, 2018). More recently, the development of language teacher educators (TEs) has also been scrutinized because they play a “central role in defining and disseminating ideas about pedagogy” through their work with teacher candidates (TCs; Wright, 2009, p. 102). Researchers attended to the ways in which language TEs construct their knowledge base of language teacher education, conceive of their beliefs, values, and priorities in the practices of teacher education (Percy & Sharkey, 2018), and negotiate their identities (Yuan, 2017). However, language TE identity is still undertheorized and underresearched. Although all practitioners (e.g., doctoral students, practicum supervisors, adjunct lecturers, university researchers) who teach courses to language TCs could call themselves language TEs, that identity is mostly assigned to the university professors in the teacher certification programs who also have research responsibilities in their job description. To address the gap, this article unpacks some questions about the ongoing negotiation of the being and becoming of a language TE and the influence of this negotiation on self-development. More specifically, it includes my viewpoints and opinions regarding the role of the Teaching English as a second language (TESL) practitioner identities as a teacher, TE, and researcher in professional self-development. To substantiate these viewpoints, it also presents an illustrative case to discuss my recent experience of exercising agency to redesign a teacher education course for TESL TCs around the semester-long activity of authoring an autoethnography.

TESL TEs use narrative writing, particularly literacy and language learner autobiographies, as an important teacher learning instrument in their courses, for example, to explore TCs’ instructional beliefs, values, and priorities (Bailey et al., 1996), understand the intersection of professional and linguistic identities (Pavlenko, 2003), and find an issue to study in an action research project (Selvi & Martin-Beltrán, 2016). The approach of critical autoethnography in the current article builds upon this narrative tradition, but it also attempts to expand it in three ways (Yazan, 2018). First, it aims to help TCs develop a critical perspective to English language teaching practices because such practices include the teaching of language and discourse through which people negotiate, construct, and circulate meanings, representations, and ideologies (Hawkins & Norton, 2009). This critical perspective includes understanding and questioning the interests that language and discourses serve and the messages they convey overtly and covertly (Hawkins & Norton, 2009). Second, because of its ethnographic focus, autoethnography includes “stories of/about the self told through the lens of culture” (Adams, Holman Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 2), and autoethnography as a teacher-learning tool focuses on the situated nature of TCs’ identities in the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts. Last, critical autoethnography affords the discursive

and experiential space for TCs to not only re-remember their prior language learning and teaching experiences, but also (re)story their current experiences in the teacher education program (Golombek, 2017). These aspects of critical autoethnography guided the changes I made in a 16-week graduate course (Linguistics for Classroom Teachers) that I taught at a large state university in Southeastern United States in Spring 2018.

Positioning myself as a teacher educator and researcher of teacher education, I incorporated critical autoethnography as the main assignment of my course, in which five teacher candidates and a doctoral student participated. Because I understand teacher identity as an organizing construct and framework to conceive of teacher learning, knowledge, skills, experience, and practice (Olsen, 2016), I discuss identity in every class I teach. However, in Spring 2018, I asserted agency to make a fundamental change in the Linguistics course to center it on teacher identity as an explicit focus. Upon introducing this assignment to my students, they sounded excited to do a different project that would be about themselves, but also rightfully and expectedly expressed concerns about their need for support along the way. I had designed the critical autoethnography assignment with such support and scaffolding in mind. That is, it included writing four installments and for each installment, I gave written feedback through Microsoft Word comment boxes and one-on-one meetings to discuss my comments and their questions. During class meetings, we discussed their questions as a large group, talked about their progress in their narratives, and potential theoretical frameworks they could use to analyze their experiences. In the last class meeting, they were expected to present their critical autoethnographies, answer questions from their peers, and briefly talk about the venues for the presentation and publication of their autoethnographies.

As this article discusses one of my self-development efforts by using the concepts of identity and agency, the introduction should include some relevant background information about me. I am originally from Northwestern Turkey, bordering Greece and Bulgaria, and I started imagining and positioning myself as a teacher when I was placed in a teacher training high school that prepared me for a university-level English language teaching (ELT) program. Despite a very test-oriented English language instruction, I could safely say that I started learning English in high school, but my substantial language development occurred in the ELT program, which granted me the diploma to teach English as a foreign language in Turkey. Apart from tutoring and unofficial teaching jobs, my first teaching position was in an intensive English program at a small private university in Turkey's capital, where I taught all levels of English to young adult learners for 5 years before I moved to the United States for my doctoral studies in July 2009. Leaving Turkey was a significant experience for me, not only because it was my first time outside my home country, but also because I had left my job, coworkers, and entire support network of friends and family.

My doctoral studies were in the second language education and culture program housed in a Curriculum and Instruction Department at a large research-intensive state university located in the mid-Atlantic United States. I served in this department as a graduate teaching assistant for 5 years, which gave me the opportunity to teach courses to undergraduate and graduate-level TCs and conduct my dissertation research on these TCs' identities. Upon graduation in August 2014, I started working at the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at a large state university in the Southeastern United States. Although I am in a research-intense tenure-track position that requires a consistent record of publication, I identify myself as a teacher educator as much as a researcher. I work with both undergraduate and graduate-level TCs in world languages and ESL teacher education programs that are housed in secondary education. There is an increasing number of English language learners (ELLs) and immediate need for ESL teachers in the state, yet the number of TCs in our program has not grown much. Aware of the common ESL model in the public schools, my colleague and I have been trying to incorporate a course for content area TCs to learn how to work with ELLs for 3 years. The state policies for teacher certification and current course load in the programs of study precluded us at the undergraduate levels, although we recently had a Master's level course approved.

Conceptual Background

Teacher Educator Identity

Teacher identity holds a central role in the ways in which teachers develop their professional knowledge and competence as well as their teaching practices in the classroom (Reeves, 2018). Marking the transition into the teaching profession, establishing and maintaining an identity as a teacher is inseparable from teachers' ongoing professional learning and growth (Martel, 2018; Yazan, 2017). The same is true for TEs. Becoming a teacher of TCs requires the construction of a TE identity, which is an ongoing, fluid, multidimensional, and context-bound process, but it does not happen automatically with the assignment of a new role (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2015; Murray, 2016). Multiple, dynamic, subjective, and relational, TE identities are formed through a continuous interplay between context-bound influences (constraining or enabling) and TEs' own meaning-making shaped by their beliefs, values, and priorities (Trent, 2013). This interplay involves the connection between the personal and the professional, which are complexly interwoven within TE identities (Dinkelman, 2011). TE identities are not only imagined and asserted by TEs but also assigned to them through their official roles and responsibilities within the institutions that define the profession (Dinkelman, 2011). Therefore, TEs negotiate their identities as they position themselves and are positioned by others (e.g., employers, colleagues, TCs) in

their educational and institutional context. These positionings could lead TEs to feel professionally uncomfortable during the long process of establishing a TE identity (Murray & Male, 2005).

For many TEs, maintaining their teacher identity is important in their negotiation of TE identities for credibility, especially if they serve as internship supervisors of TCs and work with cooperating teachers (Murray, 2016). They tend to position themselves as “still-a-school-teacher” who know how schools operate (Boyd & Harris, 2010) and their prior experiences of learning, teaching, and learning to teach languages undergird their negotiation of aspired and invested TE identities. TEs also identify themselves as academics or researchers in most cases, because research productivity is typically a key component in their professional responsibilities framed by institutional norms. Therefore, due to a potential struggle between multiple identities (Williams, Ritter, & Bullock, 2012), they might circumstantially rely on their TE or researcher identities, or they could intentionally enact concurrent identities.

TEs’ views on teacher learning are influenced by how they position themselves as researchers epistemologically and ontologically, and what topics they see as important and intriguing research phenomena. For instance, a TE who identifies as a qualitative researcher would be more likely to introduce TCs to content from the field of qualitative literature. Also, a TE who is interested in world Englishes research would want to design a world Englishes course or incorporate some relevant content into existing courses. In addition, identities of TE and researcher could be more intricately intertwined when TEs have research agendas focused on teacher learning (Golombek, 2017). In this case, TEs’ research commitments impact their pedagogies and practices of teacher education, and they could be more conscious and agentive about the choices they make when designing the activities of teacher education. Their instructional values and priorities are largely grounded in their research-based beliefs on learning to teach, teaching teachers, and teacher education curriculum and standards.

Teacher Educator Agency

In understanding TE identity, the construct of agency can consider the ways in which TEs make choices, demonstrate resistance, and interpret their experiences as they form their identities (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2015). The ongoing process of identity construction involves enacting agency that is “socioculturally mediated” (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Agency is not individuals’ free will unrestrained from social impacts, but it is not solely constrained and enabled by the social structures, either (Ahearn, 2001). Agency emerges from the interaction between individuals’ determined goals and attempts, availability of resources, and structural dynamics and influences in the sociocultural context. When enacting agency, individuals pull themselves out of contextual constraints and confines to make choices about what resources

to use and actions to take to attain their individual and social transformation goals (Duff, 2012).

Oriented by their professional identities, TEs exercise agency when forging their pedagogies of teacher education, designing and executing their practices, and engaging in the activities of continual learning to educate teachers and help them develop professional identities. As in their identity formation, TEs fluidly and contextually negotiate their agency across time and space. Inseparable from their imagined identities, agency manifests TEs' investment (Barkhuizen, 2016), which comprises their commitment to their professional goals, practices, and identities and constant negotiation of various power relationships and structures (Darvin & Norton, 2018). TEs' agency is resourced, constrained, and bounded by the space they are afforded to become the kind of TE they envision and the support they receive from the leadership and experienced colleagues in their institution. It takes time to identify concrete goals to pursue and take control over the ways they position themselves in their interactions with colleagues, TCs, administrators, and cooperating teachers and engage in the activities of teacher education (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2015). Their choices are not always their first choices. Particularly, beginning TEs are often pulled in different directions and deal with stress as they try to "balance multiple and often competing demands" in their institutional setting (Williams et al., 2012, p. 251). Therefore, TEs' assertion of agency includes the tension between the kind of TE they aspire to become and the kind they believe others expect them to become.

Teacher Educator Self-Development

Drawing upon the constructs of identity and agency in relation to professional learning and practice, I define TEs' self-development as *agentive efforts to construct their pedagogies and practices of teacher education with the purpose of becoming the kind of TE they aspire to become*. Conceptualizing self-development through the lens of identity and agency foregrounds TEs' power to map out their routes of identity construction and claim ownership of their ongoing professional growth. This conceptualization also acknowledges the contextual affordances and constraints that influence the discursive and experiential space provided for self-development. Then, integral to identity construction at the nexus of individual and social, self-development occurs when TEs, cognizant of the available resources and potential challenges, make choices to lead their own professional learning and practices and implement innovative activities that substantiate their aspired identities (Martel, 2018). Therefore, self-development requires individuals' consciousness of their identities and the degree of agency they can assert in the construction of these identities.

One of the significant self-development tools TEs use is self-study of teacher education practices. Self-study can capture the layered and complex nature of teacher education and TE identity through various research

methods, such as case study, autoethnography, and narrative inquiry (Boyd & Harris, 2010; Percy & Sharkey, 2018). Self-study is a “sustained, systematic, and careful inquiry into one’s own practice . . . to develop [one’s] basis for knowing about teaching teachers” (Bullock, 2009, p. 292). Such inquiry promotes TE self-development because it explores a focal aspect of TE identities and practices with a critical self-reflexive approach and informs TE’s own work and broader enterprise of teacher education (Percy & Sharkey, 2018). Self-study also affords TEs the discursive space to engage in disciplined and inquiry-based reflection on their identities and practices (Izadinia, 2014) and, thereby, model engagement with reflective teaching and practitioner research for their TCs (Percy & Sharkey, 2018). Through self-study, TEs negotiate their identities as researchers and practitioners, develop more nuanced understanding of teacher education practices, address their professional tensions and quandaries, and reflect on their practices (Izadinia, 2014).

Asserting Agency: Conception of an Identity-Oriented Course

We, as TEs, enact our identities as we design and teach a teacher education course. From the design of course to the teaching-assessing reflective cycle, our choices and decisions are the acts of agency that lead to the kind of TE we are and imagine becoming. Therefore, our self-development involves inquiring into the relationship between our practice and multiple identities as teacher, TE, and researcher. For me, the semester of Spring 2018 was a remarkable time as I took agentive action to redesign one of my graduate courses (Linguistics for Classroom Teachers), which was informed by my pedagogical commitment to having TCs explicitly work on their identity construction. I see this experience as a significant point in my self-development as a TE, and writing this manuscript to open it “to public scrutiny and debate” (Percy & Sharkey, 2018, p. 2) is also part of this self-development.

My Initial Wrestling with TE Identity

Before I discuss my experience this semester, I provide some background to my TE identity. I first began asking questions about my TE identity in the second year of my doctoral studies when one of my graduate assistantship duties included teaching an undergraduate course as part of a TESL minor program, which was an educative and uplifting experience for the job I imagined having in the future. I was “technically” a TE because most of the students taking this course would become teachers of English learners, but I could hardly claim this identity for myself then. I was questioning my competence and credentials as a TE, and my identity as a doctoral student and graduate teaching/research assistant was more highlighted in the institutional context. Would teaching a course for TCs qualify me as a TE? I kept asking

this question even after I taught several other teacher education courses until I graduated from the doctoral program. Also, because I was studying issues pertaining to the initial TESL teacher preparation as my main research area, I was also interested in what knowledge and skills TEs need, what qualifies TEs, and how they are prepared for the job (Wright, 2009). I would ask these questions: Would obtaining a doctoral degree in a related field and working in a position that includes working with TCs suffice to become a teacher educator? Would all professors/researchers in such positions claim or imagine a TE identity? I have been deliberating such questions since then, and I believe my (emerging) identities as a TESL TE and researcher have always been complexly interwoven.

Becoming a TE has been more complicated for me than the transition I experienced when I became a language teacher back in 2005. This is possibly because there is no formal training process tied to a degree that marks the official recognition of a new role as a TE. Most of the TEs are PhD holders, but there is not a specific component in most doctoral programs in TESOL/ Applied Linguistics that is geared toward helping budding TEs construct their knowledge, practices, and pedagogies of teacher education. My TE identity was more prominent when I started the position as a faculty member at my current institution. This position afforded me the discursive and experiential space to enact my TE identity. I was institutionally positioned as a TE not only in my job description but also in my interactions with colleagues, TCs, their mentor teachers, and administrators. For example, I negotiate my identity as I attend faculty meetings in which I am interactively positioned as someone whose opinion matters when discussing the education of TCs and making pertinent programmatic decisions. However, my TE identity is mostly eclipsed by the increased institutional demand to conduct research, publish, and secure grant funding, which demonstrates the relationship between pressing institutional demands, and our identity and agency. This demand complicates the multiple and contending identities I negotiate and puts me in acutely uneasy situations in which I had to strike the balance when I invest my time and energy in these identities. Feeling pressure from different directions, I find these situations as important reflective moments to see the intimate relationship between TE identity, agency, investment, and emotions.

Aligning Practice with Pedagogy of Teacher Education

One of the crucial issues I grapple with as a TE is the alignment between my practices and pedagogical commitments in teacher education. I view TESL teacher preparation through the lens of identity, which foregrounds teacher identity development as the main goal in this preparation (Yazan, 2018). This follows Olsen's (2008) argument that, apart from being a research frame, teacher identity could serve as "a pedagogical tool that can be used by TEs

and professional development specialists to make visible various holistic, situated framings of teacher development in practice” (p. 5). Sharing this argument, I have been questioning my practices as a TE to see the extent to which I can integrate identity as a pedagogical tool in my courses. This also resonates with the work by TESOL/Applied Linguistics scholars who frame teachers’ (Morgan, 2004) and TEs’ (Motha et al., 2012) identities as pedagogy orienting their practices.

The first time I took over the “Linguistics for Classroom Teachers” course, I found myself trying to figure out what kind of content (i.e., readings, activities, discussions, assignments) such a linguistics course intended specifically for teachers should include, and how it can contribute to the construction of language teacher knowledge base. I was familiar with the scholarly conversations about language teacher learning and knowledge base, which supported my pedagogical commitments (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Graves, 2009). To address these two major questions, I highlighted two dimensions in this course: (a) linguistic concepts are tied to classroom practices (e.g., a class on phonology also needs to have discussion of teaching pronunciation); and (b) the course scope is expanded to introduce TCs to the topics of identity, “nativeness,” world Englishes, and sociocultural theories in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), along with traditional academic knowledge about language.

Before I started revising my syllabus to teach this course for the fourth time in Spring 2018, I had published two manuscripts from my dissertation whose findings corroborated the argument that teacher learning and identity negotiation are inseparable. Drawing on the implications of these findings, I attempted to design a program-wide teacher education activity that explicitly frames teacher learning as identity development and that I named “critical autoethnographic narrative (CAN)” (Yazan, 2018), which was called for by scholars in TESOL/Applied Linguistics (Canagarajah, 2012; Mirhosseini, 2018). It was at that point when I decided to pilot CAN in my course when preparing my syllabus for Spring 2018, which was also encouraged by the peer reviewers’ comments on CAN.

My intention with CAN was to make identity construction as the major goal of this teacher education course, which would impact “the three layers” of my language teacher education practices (Wright, 2009). This decision involved my identity negotiation and agency assertion as a TESL TE, and I was aiming to support my students’ identity and agency as TESL teachers, which, on the third level, would encompass their support of their learners’ identity and agency as new language users. I discussed my commitment in relation to these three layers in the classes and explicitly shared with my students what I intended for them with CAN. Maintaining transparency about my goals through this assignment, I wanted to model a critical autoethnographic narrative approach to language teaching and learning, and my self-development efforts in teaching, which are influenced by TE identity. I

explained to the TESL TCs in this linguistics class my pedagogical beliefs and values that centre on identity as a framework for teacher learning. Throughout the semester, they observed me reflect on the implementation of CAN and negotiate my TE identity, as I continually gathered feedback from them as the CAN authors. My reflective stance to CAN encouraged them to talk about the assignments they used as teachers. For example, one TC told how he decided to have his students keep journals about their learning after he wrote about his own in relation to his identity as a language learner and user. Later on, he shared in the class that he began reading and commenting on his students' journals with an identity lens.

Critical Autoethnographic Narrative as a Semester-Long Assignment

CAN came out of my grappling with the identities of TE and researcher. As well, it culminated in an act of agency that aligned my teacher education practices with my pedagogical beliefs and values, and framed identity as an explicit goal in teacher preparation. CAN was theoretically based on the premise that teachers construct their identities in and through narratives of their experiences, and they assert agency to make sense of their practice based on their self-stories (Barkhuizen, 2016). To provide TCs with the narrative space, I designed this assignment as four installments to be completed throughout the semester with feedback from our one-on-one conferences after each installment and large group conversations during class meetings. The first two installments were for TCs to re-remember their earlier and recent experiences with language use, learning, and teaching, that is, to generate the autoethnographic data. In the third and fourth installments, they could still add more stories, but I wanted them to focus on the analysis of their stories mainly in the second half of the semester. After each installment, I read their submission to provide written feedback in Microsoft Word comment boxes, which I shared with the TCs when I scheduled the one-on-one feedback conference. Each conference was meant to ensure my comments were clear and to answer my students' questions about their progress at that time in the course and plans about the next steps in this assignment. These conversations provided more discursive and experiential space for TCs to negotiate their identities based on their stories and for me to reflect on the ways I can facilitate their use of identity as a framework.

In the feedback conferences after installments 3 and 4, we also specifically talked about the theories to use when analyzing their stories and how to use them. Helping their self-analysis, I often found myself enacting identities of a researcher with interest in teacher identities, as well as a TE with commitment to support TCs' identity development. These identities vied with each other as my researcher-self was more than ready to suggest analyses for TCs' stories, whereas my TE-self selected to adhere to my pedagogical goal of guiding them in their analytic process without doing it for them. In addition,

what we individually discussed in the feedback conferences was also part of our class meetings, which devoted some time to students' questions about their progress on CAN. Their autoethnographies and the concomitant identity focus in the course pervaded the class conversations and sometimes the TCs shared their stories related to the topic of the day and then asked if these stories could be incorporated in their autoethnographical narratives. For instance, during a discussion on the discourses of "nativeness" in language education, one TC shared how her husband was denied job applications at a university job fair because of his "non-native" accent, and she told us about her husband's enthusiasm to speak English like a U.S. Southerner. In the subsequent installment (#3), she narrated this story in her autoethnography and discussed her responses to such linguistic practices entrenched in the society, and how these practices impact language learners' identities.

Implementing this identity-oriented instructional tool, I had three reflection points, which involved some identity negotiation for me as a TE. First, CAN was an entirely new type of assignment for my students, which is why I needed to spend some time, throughout the semester, to ensure that they accepted CAN as relevant to the course content, goals they had in mind when signing up for it, and as a useful tool for their teacher learning. For that purpose, we had readings and discussions about the inseparable nature of identity and learning, and language use as the main discursive performance in which we negotiate our identities. Drawing from general teacher education, we discussed Olsen's (2016) concept of "interpretive frame," which comprises the preconceived notions that TCs bring into the teacher education program and constitutes the basis for teacher identity development. We also read and discussed six (published and unpublished) sample autoethnographies written by TESL practitioners. Having them "buy into" the idea of authoring their autoethnography required us to have an iterative process of making sense of the nexus between the concepts of identity, learning, language, and narrative. Negotiating and enacting my identity as a TE, I had to practice articulating this nexus to TCs in the teacher learning environment rather than to other researchers/TEs in an academic conference or journal article. As I did not have an example of this assignment in my educational trajectory, it was challenging for me to figure out the ways to present CAN as a legitimate teacher learning tool and support TCs in their authoring endeavors. However, all TCs sounded excited to work on an assignment throughout the semester in a scaffolded fashion that differed from their other graduate school assignments and focused on their own stories and professional identities. Two TCs were interested in creative writing and liked CAN right away, and the other four (with experience as transnational learners and teachers) noted multiple times across the semester that they had been wishing to write their stories in an organized manner for a while and that CAN was so timely for this wish.

Second, I was grappling with my credibility to ask TCs to write their autoethnography and position myself as an expert to evaluate their narra-

tives, which marked another point of my TE identity negotiation. Relying on my researcher identity, I felt credible enough as someone who knows the research on teacher learning and identity and the use of autoethnography to explore identities mostly on the theoretical level. However, I never wrote an autoethnography myself and never observed a TE use it as an assignment in my graduate school coursework, which made me feel less credible on the practical level. When one of my students asked if I had written an autoethnography, out of curiosity not of intent to question my credibility, my feeling became more intense, but I used this as an opportunity to tell the class that this semester would be a learning experience for me with a steep curve. My original plan was to write my autoethnography simultaneously with my students, which would have been ideal. However, after I reviewed and commented on the TCs' first installment and met with them individually, I had to reconsider this ambitious plan. I realized the challenge of CAN in terms of the time I spent on written and oral feedback for the six TCs' autoethnographies (ultimately ending up ~60 pages each), I needed to facilitate my students' narration and analysis of their own experiences as my main mission. This decision was intimately related to my TE identity because I wanted to invest the sufficient time, care, and energy in this teacher learning tool I designed and was learning to use. Moreover, 2018 was my midtenure review year, which put additional pressure on me when making the decision to hold off the ambition to write my autoethnography in my course until another semester.

Last, I struggled when guiding my students to position themselves as language learners/users and TESL teachers narrating their stories and concurrently as researchers of themselves analyzing these stories. These struggles also marked my TE identity negotiation as I tried to find the best way to guide the six TCs in their CAN writing. Except when deciding what stories to include in their narrative, they were mostly comfortable recounting their experiences with languages. However, they needed a lot of support when approaching these experiences as data and analyzing them with a theoretical framework. They had conducted research before in other graduate courses, but autoethnography was a new method to follow and a new genre to write. They drew upon earlier experiences consuming and conducting research and brought up questions centring on the objectivity and generalizability of their CAN as legitimate research to be taken seriously by the TESOL/Applied Linguistics community. They asked questions, such as "Why would people be interested in my stories?" and "How would my narrative count as research?" Expecting such questions when designing the course, I had found sample autoethnographies in which authors discuss their positionality as teacher/researchers and articles that theorize autoethnography as a legitimate genre of qualitative research. Reading these samples, three of which were published, and other theoretical pieces, the TCs noticed autoethnography as an emerging research method in TESL research and familiarized them-

selves with the writing genre. While attempting to present autoethnography as a teacher learning and researching tool in my classes, I relied on my TE and researcher identities concurrently. As a TE, I believed that writing autoethnography could be an effective narrative experience for TCs to make sense of their stories of language learning and teaching and to negotiate and enact their identities. As a researcher of teacher education, I believed that autoethnography is a legitimate research method for TEs' self-study and self-development endeavours. Both identities undergirded my agentive actions as I addressed the struggles of my first-time use of CAN.

Conclusion

In closing the argument for TEs' self-development, first, I recommend CAN to those TEs who would like to centre their teacher education practices on TCs' identity development as an explicit goal. Although various types of narrative assignments have been established in TESL teacher education, I contend that the critical and ethnographic aspects of CAN might bring about a new lens to TCs' narratives and afford further space for TCs' identity negotiation throughout the course. In addition, TCs can present their autoethnographies in conferences and publish them in journals, such as *TESL Canada Journal* or *TESOL Journal*, which could contribute to the practitioner voice in academic venues.

Second, those who claim themselves as TESL TEs should consider using identity as an organizing framework to understand their practices and potential venues for ongoing growth. Such framework could help them understand and reflect on their pedagogical values, beliefs, and priorities and align their teacher education practices accordingly. When TEs explore how their identities impact their practice and how they negotiate and enact their identities through their practice, they find ways to assert their agency in their self-development. As TESL TEs use this identity lens to teacher education, they also gain a more nuanced understanding of TCs' identities and English-language learners' identities.

Third, self-study of teacher education, which is a missing component in the field of TESL, could complement the identity approach by strengthening TEs' critical self-reflexive stances to make sense of and enhance their practice (Percy & Sharkey, 2018). Relying on their researcher identities, TEs tended to examine various aspects of teacher education with regard to their students' learning to teach, but they have not sufficiently attended to their own practice with sustained and systematic inquiry. Engaging in self-study research, TESL TEs can hold the power to direct the contours of their self-development and claim ownership of what kind of TE they become. Future research can investigate TEs' identities potentially with self-studies of teacher education practices. As they teach TCs how to engage in action research to address issues in the language classroom, TEs should conduct action research of their

teacher education courses. They can focus on an issue emerging from their reflections, or they can examine a new component in their courses. Moreover, those TEs who decide to try CAN as part of their curriculum could conduct research on their own identity negotiation and enactment, TCs' identities writing the CAN, and the implementation of CAN in their courses.

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