Chapter 12
Teacher Identity Development of Non-Education-Degree Individuals:
A Narrative Study

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ABSTRACT

This chapter reports on the analysis of the narratives of two non-education-degree teachers to highlight the process of their teacher identity development. The analysis showed that their teacher identities were initially developed during their childhood, but then overshadowed by aspirations to have other professional identities; therefore, they did not enroll in teacher education programs. Upon graduation, they entered the teaching profession either accidentally or deliberately. Their teacher identities were shaped via active participation in teaching and professional development activities, and their ability to negotiate between their teaching competence and the practice required in the school. After their teacher identities were established, often by receiving a teaching qualification, they continued to develop their teacher identities by imagining and negotiating their teaching practices with their future selves. Generally, their teacher identity development involved a complex interaction of personal and contextual factors as well as much effort and resilience.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching staff in every school have become more diverse in our contemporary society. Traditionally, teachers must undertake training at a teacher education college and periods of supervised teaching practice, and pass all required exams to be eligible to teach as registered teachers. In this case, teacher identity appears to develop throughout the time teachers spend at the teacher education college and on the teaching practice, and continues to thrive when they start to work as registered teachers. More and more individuals have entered the teaching profession without following that conventional route, however (Heineke, Mazza, & Tichnor-Wagner, 2014). Experts in a certain field can be recruited, provided with a short induction or training scheme, and then offered work as a teacher. In this case, their teacher identity appears to develop when they have entered a school context. This process can be more complex in the context where these teachers have much autonomy in deciding their teaching practices (Heineke et al., 2014), such as in universities. Little is known, however, about how the teacher identity of this non-conventional teacher group is developed within a community of teachers.

In this chapter, the researchers will report on a study that investigated how individuals without a teaching qualification developed their teacher identity in the context of having much teaching autonomy, as well as what factors influenced the development of their teacher identity. Drawing from a pool of 20 interviews for the study, this chapter reports on the analysis the narratives of Ninh and Duong about their eight-year teacher identity development through the lens of Wenger's (2010) theory of identity development in a community of practice. The analysis shows that teacher identity development is often interrupted, renewed, and influenced by other professional identities. The teachers had to exercise agency and resilience to overcome challenges they faced during that developmental process, especially at the beginning of their teaching career. This chapter contributes to the limited body of literature about how non-teaching-qualification teachers developed their teacher identity in the initial stage of their teaching career.

BACKGROUND

Teacher Identity Development Trajectory

Professional identity is broadly defined as "the various meanings someone can attach to oneself or the meanings attributed to oneself by others" (Beijaard, 1995, p. 282). It is associated with people's perception of their professional capacity, responsibilities, and relationships (Adams, Hean, Sturgis, & Clark, 2006). In early

studies, professional identity is often viewed as a set of relatively fixed characteristics such as beliefs, values, motives, and experiences related to a profession (Ibarra, 1999). Recent studies, however, indicate that professional identity development is "an on-going and dynamic process which entails the making sense and (re)interpretation of one's own values and experiences" (Flores & Day, 2006, p. 220). Furthermore, Wenger (2010) observes that identity is an ongoing process that involves our past experiences, relationships and practices into the current status and to orient ourselves into the future.

In line with the latest perspective on professional identity, several studies have indicated that teacher identity development is a complex process with numerous influential factors along the way (Wenger, 2010). Teacher identity can be formed at a young age when children are interested in becoming teachers for simple reasons such as wearing beautiful uniforms or to be like their parents (Tran & Huynh, 2017). At the time, this initial teacher identity can be associated with the images that children observe or imagine about the profession (Tran & Huynh, 2017). Without nurturing by themselves or influential others such as parents or teachers, however, the initial teacher identity may be overshadowed by other desired professional identities and possibly fade.

Teacher identity can formally be formed when individuals enrol in teacher education programmes where they are provided with professional knowledge, trained in pedagogical skills, and exposed to real-life teaching contexts in the periods of teaching practice (Salazar Noguera & McCluskey, 2017). Together with their status of pre-service teachers, their professional knowledge and skills form a significant part of their teacher identity (Salazar Noguera & McCluskey, 2017). Moreover, some studies indicate that pre-service teachers often bring unrealistic expectations of the profession into their teacher education programme. Through their experiences with the studies or their teachers' narratives of the profession, they may discard these unrealistic expectations. If they are unable to do so during the studies at the teacher education college, they still have more opportunities to adjust their expectations during the teaching internships. Bringing unrealistic expectations of the profession into the teaching internships can be a painful experience, however, as authentic situations will go against their expectations, making them disappointed or overwhelmed (Gao & Benson, 2012; Tran & Huynh, 2017). If they cannot overcome these difficult experiences, they will experience burnout and drop out of the profession (Fives, Hamman, & Olivarez, 2007; Hong, 2010; Klassen & Chiu, 2011).

If they decide to move on in the profession, the early years can be an exhausting battle where they learn to integrate with the school culture and their teaching duties, participate in professional development, collaborate with people in the school, and appropriately handle their lives with a low salary rate (Dicke, Elling, Schmeck, & Leutner, 2015; Manuel & Carter, 2016; Schaefer, 2013). This transitional phase is

also the time when they have to fill the gap between their teaching capacity and that required in reality, as well as continue to adjust their unrealistic expectations of the profession (Dicke et al., 2015). Therefore, their professional identity development in these first years can involve complex interactions of both personal and contextual factors (Schaefer, 2013; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011). Those who are able to resiliently fight for the teaching career, through active participation in the assigned duties, can enhance their professional knowledge and skills, probably in a much more practical manner compared with the time when they are at the teacher education college and in the internship (Salazar Noguera & McCluskey, 2017). Working as independent teachers with abundant tasks involved would offer them several opportunities to build a better version of their teacher identity but may also erode that identity. Research has shown that resilience is the major factor that helps early career teachers to build their teacher identity and prevents them from leaving the profession (Arnup & Bowles, 2016; Pearce & Morrison, 2011). Conversely, for those who are not resilient enough, their teacher identity may become eroded and altered by a new professional identity when they decide to leave the teaching profession to follow a new non-teaching career path (Schaefer, 2013).

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of teachers who enter the profession without completing a formal teacher education programme (Heineke et al., 2014). For example, individuals with Information Technology qualifications may be employed to teach computer skills in high schools, or those with a high level of English can be employed to work as English teachers in commercial English language centres. The increase in the number of this group of teachers can be attributed to attempts to fill the vacancies of formally-trained teachers who leave the profession and the growth of alternative certification programmes that allow non-education majors to enter the teaching sector (Heineke et al., 2014). The increase may also be associated with the proliferation of knowledge areas that teacher education programmes may not be able to include in training pre-service teachers; therefore, recruiting experts in these areas to work as teachers is a necessity.

For individuals who enter the teaching profession without enrolling in a teacher education programme, their teacher identity development process is even more complex and full of challenges. These unconventional teachers may own adequate knowledge of a subject but may not necessarily possess sufficient pedagogical knowledge and practices. This suggests that they may face more challenges in conducting their teaching than those who have formally been trained to become teachers. Therefore, this group of teachers are more likely to experience burnout and drop out of the profession if they cannot successfully cope with challenges related to the profession. This also suggests that teaching induction and support as well as each teachers' resilience is crucial for them to conduct their teaching effectively and remain with the profession.

However, the issue of how non-Education-degree individuals develop their teacher identities is often under-investigated, especially in developing countries such as Vietnam. Understanding why these individuals decide to enter the teaching profession, how they successfully cope with challenges during the early years of their teaching career, and their imagination of their future professional identity would be practically important for improving the effectiveness of practices related to teacher recruitment, professional development, and management.

Teacher Education and Induction in Vietnam

Teacher education programs in Vietnam can be classified into two types: a four-year program training teachers who teach all levels from kindergarten to high school and the other three-year program training teachers who mainly teach students from kindergarten to middle high school. Despite variance, a teacher education program typically aims to help pre-service teachers achieve the following bodies of knowledge and skills (Kieu et al., 2016):

- General knowledge in social sciences, natural sciences, and political education;
- Pedagogical knowledge and skills as well as knowledge of the specialized subject they will teach in the future;
- Authentic teaching skills via a supervised teaching practicum in a real school setting;

In some teacher education programs, pre-service teachers are required to write a research-based thesis as a graduation requirement, which also trains them in research skills. Alternatively, they may choose to take classes to accumulate adequate credits for graduation.

Concerning the teaching practicum, pre-service teachers are sent to schools once or twice during their studies in order to observe classes and undertake supervised teaching. The teaching practicum length may vary, but technically, it will last at least two months intensively. Recent studies have indicated that the teaching internship in Vietnam highly depends on the schools that receive the pre-service teachers, and there is little collaboration with the university (Nguyen, 2015). In the Confucian culture of the country, where teachers often hold much power and having intellectual arguments with teachers is often frowned upon (Nguyen, 2017), these pre-service teachers often comply with their mentors' teaching model rather than applying what they had been taught into practice (Le, 2014). Therefore, pre-service teachers' identity and pedagogical practices appear to be significantly molded by the supervisor during the practicum.

With regard to teacher induction and probation period, there is almost no publication about it in Vietnam. However, through the corresponding author's experience in teacher training and the induction that he underwent, the induction may include a brief introduction about the educational organization, its culture, the tasks that early career teachers are about to undertake as well as expectations of their performance. Further induction is organized through professional development activities during their probation, which may vary in length, approximately from six months to a year. During that probation period, early career teachers teach and conduct related tasks under the supervision of a mentor, often a senior colleague who teaches the same subject. If early career teachers can perform the assigned tasks effectively, they can pass the induction and begin to teach independently; otherwise, the probation period may be prolonged. During the induction and probation period, their teacher identity development, therefore, relies on the conditions provided in the organization and complex interactions between the teachers and pedagogical practices, regulations, artefact and people in that organization and available accesses to others.

The induction-probation scenario above is typical for early career teachers who have successfully completed a formal teacher education program. However, non-Education-degree teacher candidate, the induction-probation can differ depending on the type of educational organizations they are working for. In tertiary education institutions, the process may be rigorous; however, it may not be the same for those in small registered educational providers. In many instances, they are required to complete an intensive course in teaching methods prior to conducting their teaching. As such, these non-Education-degree teachers formally learn about the teaching profession when they are already in it. They may face difficulties at the beginning as they have to learn and simultaneously apply what they have learned into the teaching context. Until now, there are few studies about teacher education in Vietnam, let alone non-Education-degree teacher induction and professional development. Therefore, this chapter will be one of the first studies that address non-Education degree teachers' professional identity development in Vietnam.

The Theoretical Framework: Wenger's Theory About Identity Development

Wenger's theory of identity formation can provide an appropriate framework for exploring teacher identity development at the initial phase of their career. It provides a useful theoretical lens through which researchers can explore the complexity of how beginning teachers interact and interpret their lived experiences, which contributes to the formation and development of their professional identity.

In Wenger's theory, our identity is lived in our daily activities. He maintains that identity is a trajectory that 'incorporates the past and the future into the experience of the present', 'accumulates memories, competencies, key formative events, stories, and relationships to people and places', as well as 'provides directions, aspirations, and [project] images of oneself that guide the shaping of the trajectory going forward' (Wenger, 2010, p. 185). Therefore, when we cross different professions or organizations, we bring with us the former professional identity to the current one. Identity, in his view, is simultaneously constructed at multiple levels. For example, 'teachers can identify (or dis-identify) with the teachers in their school, district, region, discipline, country, and even with all teachers in the world' (Wenger, 2010, p.185). Thus, during the trajectory of professional identity development, there may be 'tension between our investment in the various forms of belonging and our ability to negotiate the meanings that matter in those contexts' (Wenger, 1998, p. 188). Therefore, in Wenger's view, identity formation is a dual process of identification and negotiation of meanings.

Identification Process

Wenger's term 'identification' refers to our efforts in building associations and differentiations (Wenger, 2010). It is a process in which we continuously identify, or are being identified, as belonging to a social class, professional sector, or roles. Identification also involves participation through which we accumulate lived experiences of belonging that constitute who we are. Therefore, identification is both relational and experiential, as Wenger concluded.

In Wenger's view, identification can occur via three processes, namely engagement, imagination, and alignment (Wenger, 2010). Accordingly, in the engagement process, we invest efforts to connect with other members of that community. Through relating ourselves to others, we will gradually define who we are, figure out how to participate in activities and identify competences necessary for our engagement in that community.

Imagination is a process in which we relate ourselves to the world beyond the community of practice in which we are engaged (Wenger, 2010). By this, we create images of the world and see ourselves in them. We can also use these images to locate ourselves, to view ourselves from different perspectives, to reflect our situations and to explore new possibilities. However, in Wenger's observation, imagination can also lead to stereotypes, especially when we lack understanding of or overgeneralize our practices.

Alignment process allows us to better connect to the community by adjusting our practice to make it aligned with other community members' practices (Wenger, 2010). However, alignment is not a one-way compliance, but it can be 'a two-way process of coordinating perspectives, interpretations, actions, and contexts so that action has the effects we expect' (Wenger, 2010, p. 185). As such, alignment involves power and mutual influence between members of a community. Wenger (1998) points out that using coercion or oppression to achieve alignment of practices within a community or organization may increase the chance of formation of marginal identity among its members. Nevertheless, it is this alignment process that help the identity of a large group, such as an institution or a firm, to become the identity of its members.

Negotiation Process

Identity development also includes negotiation which determines how much we can contribute to and shape the practices in a community (Wenger, 1998). He notes that when we participant in events or actions, we create practices. Some practices are more valuable than others, depending on the power of the practice creator and negotiations of members. Therefore, practices in a community are characterized by both harmony and conflicts (Wenger, 2010).

He also realizes that community members can claim the ownership of a practice when they can use, modify or appropriate it as their own. When many people take part in the negotiation process, appropriation of practices increases. Wenger points out that due to imbalance of power that community members hold, some members may fail to negotiate and claim ownership of practices. These members gradually disengage with the community and form marginality identity (Wenger, 2010). It may also occur to the practice creators, especially when they are unable to reclaim the practices they produce (Wenger, 2010).

In a community of practice, the production and adoption of practices appear to go hand in hand. Wenger (2010) observes that members whose practices are consistently rejected and whose experiences are considered irrelevant will develop an identity of marginality. In contrast, members whose practices are accepted and whose experiences are valued by a community will move to a central identity. This process sometimes involves much time, effort, and resilience from a member of a community (Pearce & Morrison, 2011).

THE STUDY

This chapter will address the following research question: "*How do individuals entering the teaching profession without a teaching qualification develop their*

teacher identities?". It is noted here that in this study, the term 'non-Education-degree teachers' refer to those who formally major in a discipline rather than Teacher Education but choose to become teachers, including who attended a short course in Education along with their major but with no authentic teaching experiences.

This study was conducted using a narrative inquiry approach. "Narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 17). This approach has been used to understand teacher professional identity development because "through storytelling, teachers engage in narrative 'theorizing' and, based on that, teachers may further discover and shape their professional identity resulting in new or different stories'' (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, p. 121). Taylor and Littleton (2006) also remark that teachers' personal narratives can be useful to understand teacher identity development because narratives are constantly constructed, reflecting the social contexts in which they are created and involve ideologies within the individual's social environments (Taylor & Littleton, 2006). As a result, the use of narrative inquiry can serve as an appropriate approach to explore the complexity of interactions between early career teachers and the stakeholders as well as the educational setting where they worked. By investigating the complex interplay between different aspects involved in their teaching at early years, as they struggled to balance what they wanted to be and what they should do to 'survive' during the induction and later in the profession, their teacher identity development was unveiled. Their stories helped us understand how non-Education-qualification teachers formed and developed their professional identity as well as factors influencing that formation and development.

Data used in this chapter were drawn from a study that investigated the experiences of 20 teachers, who began their teaching career without majoring in Education, about their journey to become teachers. The interviewed teachers, nine males and 11 females, were in their mid-20s to late 30s, with the average age of 28.15. They were teaching at seven different educational organizations, including two public and one private tertiary education institutions, one private high school and three registered educational providers. In terms of the subjects, 10 of them were teaching English and 10 were teaching information technology, economics, law, and medicine. Many of them were early career teachers whereas some of them had been in the profession for approximately 10 years by the time of research. The average years of work experience was 3.65.

The teachers were identified and recruited on a convenient sampling technique (Robinson, 2014) because this study needed teachers to tell their life stories openly and sincerely. Our established social relationship with teachers could enhance mutual trust, allow the teachers to tell their stories without hesitation, and give us access for clarifying information after the interview, if necessary. The teachers were

interviewed face to face or via mobile phone depending on their choice. Prior to that, they were informed of the purpose of the research and asked for their consent. For each interview, the teachers were asked to narrate about their rationales to become teachers and their experience with the induction in their early professional stage. Their engagement with professional development activities, how they aligned or negotiated professional practices with those of others in the school and what enable them to negotiate were also explored. Lastly, they were asked about their imagination about their own as a professional in the future.

Two in-depth interviews with the teachers, Ninh and Duong (pseudonyms), were purposefully selected to highlight the development of teacher identities during the early years of their career and how their experiences in these years affected the development of their teacher identities. The two teachers were chosen for this research because their stories best illustrate the findings of our project.

Data in the two interviews were sorted chronologically and then coded against the identity development themes proposed in Wenger's theory: participation, imagination, alignment, and negotiations of practices. Based on the codes, a brief narrative about how these teachers' professional identity developed through their participation, imagination, alignment and negotiations of practices was written. The narrative was then sent to the respective teacher to check whether it reflect their true story. After receiving the confirmation from the teachers, the codes of the two narratives were compared to identify similarities and differences. Finally, a general view about how their teacher identities were developed was presented and discussed through the lens of Wenger's theory.

TWO TEACHERS' NARRATIVES

Ninh's Story

Ninh has always wanted to become a teacher since he was a child. He often played the role of a 'tutor' to other children in his neighbourhood. However, he did not sit the university entrance exam to enrol in English Teacher Education, but enrolled in the English Studies of a university instead. This was due to the fact that the former often "required higher entry criteria" and the "career prospects would be narrower" than the latter. During his studies, he realised that he "loved subjects related to education" and he also foresaw that teaching English would be a promising labour market in the future. Therefore, he made up his mind to become an English teacher even though he would not receive a teaching qualification from the programme he attended. To prepare for a teaching job, he attended a three-month intensive Certificate in Education course provided by the university, which would increase his

opportunity to enter the teaching profession. The course mostly imparted pedagogical knowledge to students and provided a few teaching rehearsals, but not a supervised teaching practice.

Upon graduation in 2010, he applied to work for the Foreign Language Centre of University A, one of the most well-known universities in the south of Vietnam. The centre offered in-service English language courses to learners of all ages. He successfully competed with other candidates to obtain a teaching position for evening classes after demonstrating a teaching session to leaders of the centre. Although he was given informal induction about his role, no further teaching training was provided by the centre. He stated that knowledge acquired from the intensive course in Education helped him to conduct his first teaching sessions relatively well. Leaders of the centre also attended his classes a few times to assess his teaching performance and gave him feedback about his teaching. He listened to these comments and reflected to see whether they were meaningful or only the subjective opinions of the observers.

The policies in the centre offered him a source of motivation for his career development in the early years. He recalled that initially he was not assigned many classes, mostly low-level English classes, and he was paid less than his colleagues. He admitted that this treatment made him "pretty upset" as his teacher competence was "doubted" as he was "compared against peers with a Teacher Education degree or senior colleagues". He felt better about this later, however, as it was not the leaders' or his colleagues' fault; it was up to him to convince the leaders to give him more classes to teach. He found that the centre required teachers to treat students as their customers and collected students' feedback on teachers' performance at the end of each course and then used this source of data to make decisions on assigning classes to teachers. He realised that such practices would be an opportunity for him to prove himself to the leaders. Therefore, he started to learn how to teach students effectively and satisfactorily as a way to prove his teaching competence to the leaders.

During the early years of his career, he faced many difficulties with using appropriate teaching methods. He recalled that with the same lesson, a teaching method which appeared to work well in one class "would not necessarily yield similar results in another class due to students' characteristics". He found it difficult to teach teenagers as they perceived English classes in the centre as extra classes, so they did not engage with the activities he organised. Moreover, as the centre functioned as a commercial service, even if students did not pass the test at the end of a course, they could continue to study in a class of a higher level. This caused an "imbalance in students' English language proficiency", which in turn posed huge challenges for his teaching. He also had to find ways to motivate adult learners who "did not want to communicate in the language, but preferred to read texts or do grammar exercises". Nevertheless, he invested a great deal of effort in improving his teaching quality, both to ensure students' learning outcomes and to make them satisfied with

the teaching service. Consequently, he received "good feedback and high ratings from students" and therefore was assigned more classes at higher English levels to teach.

Ninh continued to engage in professional development activities even though his teaching competence was acknowledged by the leaders. He participated in several short training courses or seminars in which new textbooks and new teaching materials were introduced. He was also involved in discussions with colleagues about effective ways of teaching for certain units in the textbooks. Furthermore, he self-improved his English language skills by "practising international English tests such as IELTS, TOEFL or TOEIC and followed reliable international media channels such as CNN, the BBC and VOA". Most remarkably, he passed the entrance exam for and completed the Master of English Teaching Methodologies offered by University A. The master's degree formally and legally recognised his teacher status. This course equipped him with "comprehensive insights into all of the teaching methods that he had used" and further enlightened him about English skills testing and assessment. All of the professional development activities and achievements made him proud and increased his confidence in his knowledge of the subject and his pedagogical knowledge and skills.

After he received the master's degree, he appeared to become more critical about changes in the English language policy of the centre and of the government, as well as what was good or bad in teaching English in the context of the region. The English Language Centre offered him a daytime job as an administrative officer in addition to his teaching position in the evening. He planned pathways for his future career development. He stated that with his knowledge and the Master's degree, he received more respect from students and invitations for English skills training activities. He planned to establish an online English training service that would help students across the country and to study Educational Management abroad. He believed that gaining more qualifications and promoting his image in the media would significantly enhance his teacher identity in terms of his confidence in his career and his reputation in the community.

Duong's Story

Duong revealed that as a child, she wanted to become a teacher to wear *ao dai*, the Vietnamese traditional dress, and help children to explore new knowledge like her teachers. She did not enrol in the English Teacher Education programme, however, but chose to sit the university entrance exam for English Studies at University A as she believed that this programme would give her "a better environment to develop her English competence and personal attributes as well as provide broader career prospects". During her studies, her character and career development planning were influenced by two successful female teachers, who became role models for her to

follow. Like Ninh, she also registered to attend the intensive Certificate in Education course to enhance her career development.

After becoming a top graduate in 2011, Duong was employed by a school in the university to teach General English subjects under an experimental curriculum development programme in that school. She also passed an exam to become a government official, as a result of which, she gained tenured employment in the university. She recalled that when she was employed, she had undertaken hardly any training in teaching English, except a course on university teaching organised by the university for all new recruits. Her mentor could not help her as "he had not majored in English teaching", so he could only help her to integrate into the academic culture of the organisation as well as complete the paperwork for her probation period. More seriously, "there was a lack of collaboration between English teachers" who ran the curriculum implementation in the school, which was halted three years later, as they worked independently. Consequently, during a one-year probation period, she 'virtually developed pedagogical practices on [her] own'.

In order to prepare for her teaching role, she actively participated in different activities. She was not assigned to teach any classes in the first semester, so she prepared the lesson plans for the upcoming semesters. She also taught some in-service English classes in the evening to gain practical teaching experience. She admitted that at first she "was not confident with her teaching", mainly due to her "lack of pedagogical knowledge and experience in running a class". She experienced some disruptive behaviour and knowledge challenges from students because of her young age at the time, in her opinion. With her sound English knowledge and skills gained from being leader of her university class, however, she was able to handle these unexpected situations well. When she started delivering the curriculum at the university, these initial teaching experiences helped her a great deal. In her view, in the academic environment of the university, students "respected [her] much more than those in the evening classes", so she could apply what she studied to teaching the class. By doing so, she could enhance her pedagogical skills and build her confidence for her teaching career. She asserted that her English knowledge enthusiasm was the key source of confidence for her teaching in the early years of her teaching career.

After the probation year, she was assigned more classes to teach. She reported that what she learned during the probation year and from the intensive course in Education was useful for her teaching activities. She emphasised, however, that in order to teach effectively, "knowledge of pedagogical practices was not sufficient". In her opinion, an "innate vocation for the teaching profession" and "frequent practice" would produce good teachers. Therefore, she continued to expand her knowledge of English and teaching methods, prepared the lessons well in advance, and rehearsed these lessons when necessary. Despite being challenged by students sometimes, she could prove her knowledge to students, successfully address their

concerns, and develop their English skills academically. Gradually, students accepted and recognised her as a competent teacher. She reported that during this time, she "devoted [herself] to motivating students to learn English actively and fostering their learning experiences".

She won a full scholarship to study on a master's programme in a top prestigious university overseas. During the course, she was able to acquire more knowledge about education and teaching approaches. After completing the programme, she returned and became a Lecturer of English at the university, but in a different school. She revealed that due to having a child and obligations with her small family, she "did not invest much in her teaching" but only attempted to complete the assigned duties. When her child was older, she started to participate actively in professional development and research activities with her colleagues. Furthermore, leaders and colleagues in the schools recognised her academic ability, so they involved her in special training programmes or selected her to participate in professional development workshops and seminars inside and outside the university. In her opinion, different from the early years of her career, she became more reflective and critical when participating in these activities. She distinguished between what would be theoretically and practically good for her teaching, and only selectively applied what she learned to teaching her students. The autonomy granted to teachers in the school enabled her to employ pedagogical practices to improve students' learning experiences according to her perspectives. She stated that her current sources of confidence include her "master's degree, sound expertise and knowledge, and effective teaching skills". Her colleagues' and leaders' recognition of her qualifications and teaching experience as well as students' respect of her hard work were valuable for helping her to feel confident about her teacher role.

In the future, she would like to become a good teacher who is respected by students and everyone around her. One of her key ambitions is to pursue a PhD degree overseas, which would make her qualified to be an academic with international standards. The degree would make her stand out from the teacher community and enable her to obtain more opportunities to conduct research and other academic activities, all of which would consolidate her teacher identity.

IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF THE TWO TEACHERS

In this section, their narratives will be discussed through the lens of Wenger's (2010) theory about identity development through social participation in a community of practice. According to this theory, teacher identity development involves a complex interaction of different factors related to the identification and negotiation processes of teaching practices within and beyond their organisation. Although the two

processes occur side by side and do not exclude each other, they will be discussed independently to highlight factors influencing their teacher identity development.

Identification Process

The formation of the two teachers' identity appeared to start in their early childhood as both dreamed of teaching others or were inspired by their teachers at that time. In line with Wenger's (1998; 2010) observations of 'imagination' beyond the boundary of a community that a member belongs to, Ninh and Duong could have formed some ideas about the teaching profession, such as being kind, wearing uniforms, teaching other people to understand something, which they shared in the interviews. However, they did not nurture their dream of becoming a teacher, nor did anyone support their dream. Therefore, neither of them enrolled in a Teacher Education programme. This was also partially driven by their rational choice to enrol in a programme that matched their academic ability, could better develop their competence, and could provide broader career prospects. Nevertheless, both had anticipated becoming teachers by attending a short course for a certificate in Education. Although the course did not provide them with practical teaching experience, it provided basic knowledge about education and teaching methods, which could be useful for their later teaching career. Their teacher identity re-emerged again when they were employed to work as teachers, which will be discussed below.

This study also suggested that their teacher identities were shaped tremendously by the work environment of their organisation. As they did not hold qualifications and teaching experience conventionally accepted to perform the job of a teacher, both had to undergo a probation period, which also included induction and/or supervised teaching practice. Duong appeared to be confident when entering the lecturer position as she had good English knowledge and skills. With a rigorous administrative process for newly-recruited lecturers and her mentor's support, she developed her English teaching competence academically and methodologically to align it with teaching in an academic institution. Ninh's probation period was limited within a brief introduction to the courses he would deliver and a few class observations to determine whether he could teach effectively or not. In the commercial English Language centre, he had more freedom to develop his teaching skills in the first years as long as it could satisfy the student-customers, the functional principle of the centre. In both cases, it seemed that although there was a lack of mentorship in the early stage of their career, they seemed to fight resiliently to develop good teaching performance. This lack of mentorship was caused by the inappropriate appointment of the mentor in the case of Duong, and the lack of such a practice in the case of Ninh. This could cause difficulties for those who were unable to self-direct their learning to become teachers. For Ninh and Duong, who appeared to possess a high level of self-directed

learning ability, the lack of mentorship was turned into fertile ground for them to develop the kind of teacher identity they wished to have as long as their teaching approaches were aligned with the practices preferred by their organisations. In short, their active participation in teaching activities and engagement with professional development activities seemed to help bridge the knowledge they had acquired and the practical skills they needed to effectively perform the teaching duties in the context of their schools, as suggested by Salazar Noguera and McCluskey (2017).

Their teacher identity was also influenced by the recognition of people in the organisation. Duong's good knowledge of English associated with her graduating with distinction was recognised immediately by her mentor and colleagues. Although students challenged her knowledge, her ability to teach and address these challenges convinced students and she earned recognition from them. She could exercise her authority over students as the students had to pass her subjects; therefore, it was easy for her to handle unexpected situations in class. She successfully completed the probation period and earned the title of 'government official'. As she was able to win an international scholarship to study and gain a master's degree in a foreign institution, which not many young lecturers in the university could achieve, the recognition of people in her organisation regarding her teaching competence increased considerably and offered more opportunities for her to become involved in research and professional development activities. In the case of Ninh, it seemed that his teaching competence was not highly evaluated initially as the leaders of the centre only gave him a few low-level English classes to teach. Students in his class often refused to recognise him as their teacher and only as a tutor of 'extra classes', and they often refused to participate in certain kinds of teaching activities if these were not fun, which is what most teachers experience when they start teaching (Manuel & Carter, 2016; Schaefer, 2013). The position given to him by the centre and students prevented him from exercising his authority over student-customers, which made his teaching more difficult. Nevertheless, he did not give up, but fought harder to teach well and simultaneously satisfied his customers, resulting in high student ratings for his teaching and leaders' approval for assigning more classes to him. Through that process, he was able to enhance his teaching and strengthen his teacher identity. Like Duong, Ninh found that his teacher identity was established as a result of people's recognition after he gained the Master in English Teaching Methodologies. In general, for both teachers, the recognition of people in the community – the leaders, mentor, colleagues, and students – regarding their teaching competence was important for building their confidence and ownership of teaching practices in the early years of their teaching career, a notion in line with Wenger's theory of community of practice (Wenger, 2010). Consistent with Pearce and Morrison (2011), however, this study showed that in order to gain recognition and move to the centre of the teacher community, both teachers had fought resiliently

against obstacles, such as their novice teaching competence, students' objections, and policy compliance, among others.

In this study, the 'imagination' – one of the three modes of belonging/identification – of the teachers was also demonstrated in the way they envisioned the prospect of their teaching career. Both had envisioned a future career path in which their teacher identities would be elevated to a greater extent. Duong confidently linked her future teacher identity with PhD studies and research activities, which seemed to be inspired by the community of academics in her school. In this way, her professional identity would transform into a researcher-university teacher instead of purely a university teacher, which is the identity she has at present. Ninh envisioned his future teacher identity more practically by linking it with his plan to establish an online teaching platform which would help to promote his teacher image. Ninh also wanted to upgrade his qualifications by studying Educational Management, suggesting that his teacher identity would shift to a managerial position, one that was likely to be associated with his recently-offered job as an administrative officer at the centre. In general, both teachers imagined their future professional identity through careful consideration of the current situation and promising career development opportunities. Together with a 'break' in their teacher identity development when they decided not to enrol in the Teacher Education programme, or when Duong had to perform her motherhood duties, this imagination of their future professional identities suggested that teacher identity development may not be continuous but can be overshadowed by other professional and non-professional identities or career aspirations; it can also be expanded or shifted to elevate the image of the teachers, an issue that is discussed by Schaefer (2013).

In short, throughout this identification process, the teacher identities progressively moved from the margin to the centre of the teacher community (Wenger, 2010). The lived experiences of both teachers revealed three issues that were important for their identity development. Firstly, their competence with respect to the teaching profession should be acknowledged by those involved in the community – the leaders, mentor, colleagues, and students. Only when their professional competence was acknowledged by members of the community did they become confident in their teaching, which seemed to help to solidify their teacher identity. Secondly, identification appears to be a non-continuous trajectory and full of challenges, so it required a great amount of resilience from each teacher. The cases showed that teacher identity could be formed at an early age, overshadowed by other professional aspirations, then re-emerge and be rejected by the students or questioned by authorities (other teachers and leaders). Thirdly, consistent with the findings of Arnup and Bowles (2016), the findings in this study indicated that active participation and resilience were essential for the early career teachers to develop their teacher identities successfully, retain their career, and help to renew their identities depending on the activities they participated in

and imagination of their future professional identity. These factors were especially vital when teachers were not inducted appropriately.

Negotiation Process

The two narratives suggested that the negotiation process occurred throughout the trajectory of the teachers' identity development. In the early stage of their teaching career, both appeared to be involved in a negotiation process between their own teaching competence and what was expected by the leaders and students. With little teaching experience, they realised that initially they would have to complete the teaching sessions without losing students' trust in their source of content knowledge or superiors' approval of their teaching competence (such as those who observed their teaching sessions). The source of motivation for this negotiation was their enthusiasm for the teaching profession, as indicated by Duong, and gaining more teaching opportunities, as in the case of Ninh. These sources of power helped the teachers to overcome all obstacles and burnouts, as reported in previous studies (Buchanan et al., 2013; Heineke et al., 2014), and conduct their teaching effectively to meet the stakeholders' expectations despite their lack of teaching experience. This negotiation appeared to reduce gradually, however, when the teachers developed their teaching practice.

Moreover, they had to negotiate between how they could teach and how they should teach. As employees, they were expected to comply with and adhere to the conventionally-accepted teaching practice of their organisation. Ninh was expected to help students develop English knowledge and skills and simultaneously satisfy them as student-customers because of the commercial work environment of the English Language centre. Therefore, Ninh had to change his teaching practices to meet students' learning needs, such as organising activities preferred by students which were not necessarily the most effective for their English skills development. Duong worked in an academic environment; therefore, she was expected to direct her teaching towards being academic and focusing on theoretical knowledge and skills development for students. Although both teachers were not supported by effective mentorship, they were able to align their teaching practices successfully with the requirement of their organisation. It was evidenced in the narratives that in order to develop the teaching competence compatible with their organisation's work culture, they had strived hard to win the recognition of people in the community. Fortunately, this lack of mentorship and a relatively free work environment also provided the teachers with a free zone to develop their agency and professional identities as they wished, as discussed earlier.

When their teacher identity was established after working for the organisation for a long time, the negotiation still occurred, especially when they were involved in constructing a new version of their teacher identify. For example, after obtaining a master's degree, both teachers appeared to develop stronger agency over issues related to their teaching in the organisation and their future career development. They became critical about educational policies and the effectiveness of certain teaching practices, indicating that they had started to challenge the conventional teaching practices in the organisation. This could be a premature intention of creating new practices for the community of practice, which can be accepted or rejected, as noted by Wenger (2010). Considerable teaching experience and a master's degree, which granted them formal recognition as teachers and distinguished them from the rest of the English teachers, helped them to implement what they thought was good in their classroom with fewer concerns about the conventional teaching practices in the organisation where they worked. They also envisaged alternative career paths or how to advance their teacher identity, as mentioned in the discussion about 'imagination'. Such aspirations for future professional identities manifested these teachers' power in negotiating their current professional identity and their future selves, taking into account their own interest, capacity, and potential. All of these suggested that the more mature their teacher identity grew, the more authority they held over their own teaching practices and career development trajectory.

In short, the negotiation and appropriation of practices helped the teachers' identity to develop in accordance with the institutional contexts. In line with Wenger's (2010) observation, the teachers in this study aligned their teaching practices with those conventionally-accepted in their organisation, although there was virtually no mentorship. It was also recognised that they negotiated with themselves to teach in line with the expectation of superiors and students when their teaching competence was not sufficiently developed. When they owned their teaching practices, they started to negotiate with themselves to teach effectively to improve students' learning experiences and move towards changing practices in their organisations. This is evidence that negotiations may occur throughout the trajectory of their teacher identity development. When a new version of their teacher identity emerged, a new negotiation of practices would appear and entail active participation in teaching and professional development, which could result in appropriation of practices. Accompanying these negotiations and the appropriation of practices was the teachers' resilience to fight against obstacles that blocked the way to the new version of teacher identity.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the two teachers' experiences with the process of becoming teachers and our experiences in teacher education, we believe that the following activities would facilitate the process of becoming teachers of those who do not possess a teaching qualification:

Firstly, the recruitment and induction should be conducted properly in order for these teachers to clearly know their job responsibilities and expectations of job performance. If organized well, the induction will provide non-Education-degree teacher candidates with more information about the profession, thus they can make informed decisions of whether or not to become teachers. This can reduce the turnover possibility of these teachers after they have entered the profession and find that they cannot adapt to it.

Secondly, a probation period is essential for non-Education-degree teachers because it serves as a test of their knowledge and skills required for effectively working as teachers. During this period, they should be given opportunities to teach under the supervision of an experienced teacher, who can guide, advise and evaluate these novice teachers' work performance as well as give constructive feedback for them to improve their pedagogical practices. Likewise, the teachers should be involved in professional development activities that can expand their understanding about the teaching profession, develop more teaching skills and techniques as well as increase their confidence in working with students and other teachers.

Thirdly, non-Education-degree teachers may face many difficulties in adapting to the teaching profession and may perform under expectation due to their little experience in the job. Timely encouragement and support may help them overcome these challenges, especially at the initial stage of their career. This suggests the important role of communities of practice within which these teachers may align, move forward with, or employ more appropriate pedagogical practices alongside their career development route.

In short, to help non-Education-degree teachers to work well and retain within the teaching profession, they should be supported with pedagogical practices and relevant knowledge related to the profession so that their teacher identities can evolve firmly. Effective induction, adequate professional development opportunities, and timely encouragement and support within communities of practice can help them develop their teacher identities which allow them to work with confidence amongst those who have obtained a formal Education degree.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Through the lens of Wenger's (2010) theory of identity development in a community of practice, this chapter highlighted the processes of identification and negotiation along the trajectory of teacher identity development of two teachers without a teaching degree. Both processes involved complex interactions between the teachers and stakeholders as well as surrounding environment. They also involved a great amount of resilience that the teachers invested to enter, remain, and thrive in the profession. Future studies should continue to explore this issue with a larger population to identify factors influencing the development of teacher identity, correlations between these factors, and the extent to which these factors affect teacher identity development. In particular, as suggested by findings of this study, the influence of organisational culture, teachers' active participation, and resilience on the identity development of these two teachers should be confirmed with further investigations.

CONCLUSION

The study reported in this chapter explored the professional identity development of two teachers who entered the teaching profession without a Teacher Education qualification. Through their narratives, it was suggested that teacher identity was a developmental course that involved different lived experiences. Their teacher identities had initially been formed in their childhood due to their self-interest or being inspired by others, such as their teachers. Although they were interrupted when the two participants decided not to enrol in an Education degree programme, their initial teacher identities remained within them and re-emerged when appropriate opportunities arrived.

The teachers entered the profession through different channels or with different types of employment. The empirical data suggested that when they received recognition of their teaching competence from other members of the community, their teacher identities started to grow. As they were not qualified to teach independently, they had to undergo a probation period, either short or long, until they proved that they could conduct the teaching-related duties effectively as independent teachers. Due to a lack of mentorship during this probation period, the identity of both teachers appeared not to be shaped by the mentor or the induction, but through their self-effort to develop their own teaching practices that were aligned with the prominent culture of the organisation.

Following the probation period, their teacher identities continued to grow in line with the environment where they conducted the teaching duties. The study suggested that within the early years of their teaching career, they developed practical teaching skills via their active participation in teaching activities, self-studies, and professional development activities. They were also involved in a process of negotiation between their teaching competence and that expected by other stakeholders, as well as between how they could teach and how they should teach due to contextual factors. Both teachers were also found to have invested great effort to overcome obstacles. The main source of motivation for their engagement with teaching during these years was their passion or enthusiasm for the profession. When they were able to develop their teaching practices, their teacher identities appeared to change into a new version. Instead of ensuring that they taught well for their own sake, they started to pay more attention to embracing pedagogical practices conducive to students' learning. This growth appeared to indicate that they had successfully gained ownership of their teaching.

After they received a Master's degree in Education, which legitimately recognised them as qualified teachers and distinguished them from those who only held a Bachelor of Education degree, their teacher identities appeared to be upgraded once more. With substantial teaching experience and knowledge and ownership of a Master's degree, both teachers more strongly demonstrated their power in using teaching practices in their class. They became more concerned about new educational policies and contributed ideas in discussions about effective teaching methods for certain subjects. This demonstrated that the teachers had moved from aligning their teaching practices with the practices in the school in the early years to independently teaching students with their own views in the later years and to imposing their perspectives about effective teaching practices on others in the community. Moreover, the teachers planned for their future professional identity development, taking into account the current situation and their abilities as well as anticipating their future career prospects. Therefore, this suggested that they have become proactive in developing their own career paths and thus shaping the developmental course of their teacher identity.

In summary, the findings from this study suggested that without a teaching qualification, individuals with adequate knowledge of a subject as well as passion and commitment for the profession can perform their teaching job effectively just like those who are formally trained to become teachers. Therefore, where relevant, they should be recruited and provided with proper induction and professional training so that they can contribute to educating young people with their specialized knowledge and skills.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Identity Development: A complex, ongoing process that involves our past experiences, relationships, and practices into the current status and to orient ourselves into the future.

Narrative Inquiry: A research approach that understands human experience through storytelling.

Non-Education-Degree Teacher: A teacher who enters the teaching profession without having formally enrolled in a teacher education program.

Non-Teaching Qualification: Any qualifications that do not relate to teaching and/or pedagogy.

Probation Period: A period of time when new employees are tested for their knowledge and skills required for a job. It allows the employee and the employer to see if the employee can fit the work role.

Teacher Identity: The various meanings that teachers attach to themselves or meanings attributed to teachers by others.