LEARNING TO BE STUDENTS AGAIN:
SECOND LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS IN A CANADIAN UNIVERSITY

by

Mi-Young Kim

BA, University of Texas at Austin, 1989
MA, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 2003

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Abstract

This study reports on multiple qualitative case studies of five non-native English speaking (NNES) graduate students majoring in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) in an English-medium university in Canada. The students' academic discourse socialization experiences and the ways in which they negotiated and constructed their identities in this new context are highlighted as they navigate their first academic year in a graduate program in an English speaking context, as former teachers from an English as a foreign language context.

Adopting a second language socialization framework (Duff, 2003, 2007; Duff & Talmy, 2011), this study employs longitudinal qualitative data, mainly participant interviews, journals, and writing samples, to examine the challenges and variability of these students’ language socialization processes. Findings demonstrate non-conformity, contestation, and partial and multiple community memberships with progress as well as setbacks, thus revealing the complexity of the processes and outcomes of language socialization. As the students worked to reconceptualize and negotiate multiple voices and identities, their language socialization processes were largely impacted by their prior learning and professional experiences as well as by their future trajectories (Gale, 1994; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Shen, 1989). Findings also suggest that, along with institutional and program support, students' willingness to negotiate and invest in their new communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) accelerated their (perceived) progress in learning as well as their academic socialization.

The study suggests that NNESs, by perceiving themselves as individuals with unique needs, ideologies, and goals, can be better equipped to see themselves as multicompetent, legitimate, and full members of their graduate studies community, rather than language-deficient
peripheral members (Cook, 2005; Pavlenko, 2003). The study enhances our understanding of the necessity to redefine and recognize the diverse needs, expectations, and ideologies of a growing number of international students who increasingly compose a significant portion of the student body in North American academia and the field of TESL.
Preface

This dissertation is an original, independent, intellectual product of the author, M. Kim.

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To my loving family

Without whom none of this would have been possible
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Two decades ago, Pennycook (1995) argued that “English is in the world and the world is in English” (p. 35), as intensive globalization propelled by the advancement of information technology and global economies foregrounded English as a lingua franca for the world’s population (Crystal, 1997, 2000; Graddol, 1997). In many non-English speaking countries, particularly East Asian countries where English is taught as a foreign language, the need to learn English prompted public schools as well as many private institutions to offer more English language instruction beginning at earlier grades. For instance, in South Korea, where English had been taught starting in the seventh grade for many years, the Korean government initiated a program in 1997 to begin teaching English as a regular subject in the third grade. Since then, the number of class hours devoted to English per week has increased from one to two hours for third and fourth graders, and to two to three hours for fifth and sixth graders (Ministry of Education, Science & Technology, 2009). Moreover, educators and policy-makers have discussed beginning English instruction in the first grade and this change is projected to be in effect in the near future (J. Kim, 2010).

Consequently, English teachers have been encouraged to acquire the skills needed to bring a more communicative approach, for example, speaking and listening in English (Butler, 2004), and a degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)\(^1\) that would better equip them as teachers. Especially in the case of Korea, the demand for and popularity of a

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\(^{1}\) Often used interchangeably with Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). In this paper, TESOL will be used to streamline the discussion except at places where the distinction is needed.
TESOL degree for in-service and prospective English teachers has been highlighted in recent years. This has led many Korean students to pursue TESOL education abroad in countries like the United States and Canada as a means of improving and broadening their linguistic, academic, and sociocultural knowledge.

For many such international students, as well as many other students in various disciplines, Canada has emerged as a popular destination in recent years. From 2005 to 2010, the number of international students in Canada rose by 40% (TESOL Toronto, 2011). Also, according to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2012), in the year 2012 alone, 104,810 international students came to Canada with study permits. Among them, the first and third largest groups were from China (25,346) and South Korea (7,212), accounting for about 30% of all foreign students. Also, given the growing importance and centrality of English in Korean and Chinese societies, particularly in education, and English-speaking universities’ need for the funding generated by higher international tuition fees (“Canada wants to double its international student body”, 2015), the number of students from Korea and China studying in Canada will likely continue to grow. This influx of international, “non-native English speaking” (NNES) students has not only changed the demographics of post-secondary institutions but internationalized campuses and resulted in a student body whose cultural and linguistic backgrounds are an increasingly heterogeneous (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008).

These newly arrived NNES students consist of a significant number of graduate students (for a ratio of 2 undergraduates to 1 for graduate student; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). Until 2009, the South Korean student population was a close second to the Chinese student population, but since 2010, students from India have outnumbered Koreans.

3 The use of the dichotomized notions/terms of NNESs and native English speakers (NESs) in this dissertation is for illustration purposes only and is not intended to reify such terms and notions. With this understanding, double quotation marks will not be used henceforth. I attempt to highlight and problematize the inaccuracy of this terminology (Rampton, 1990) throughout this paper, in particular in Chapter 6.
2012), many of whom are TESOL students. They are typically older than other graduate students, as TESOL programs often require a minimum of two years of formal teaching experience (e.g., Program website, New World University [NWU]). At the university where this study was conducted, 25% of graduate students in over 250 graduate programs are international students (Graduate study website, NWU). These new students need to learn the local practices of graduate studies, as well as the oral and written academic discourse used in their disciplines. In short, they are novices or newcomers who need to engage themselves in language socialization processes in a new community or culture. Language socialization is fundamentally concerned with how members or participants of particular communities learn language and use it as a fundamental medium in the development of their knowledge and sensibilities towards the social and cultural contexts they are situated in (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2012). In other words, language socialization research investigates how novices (“newcomers”) try to attain expertise in both linguistic and nonlinguistic conventions, adopt potentially new identity positions, and learn the behaviours, practices, or dispositions associated with experts (“old timers”) in a local group, with language as a primary medium of this learning and participation (Duff, 2003, 2007; Duff & Talmy, 2011; Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986).

1.2 Purpose of the study

In light of the above-mentioned trends, this study critically investigated the language socialization of a group of NNES graduate students in a TESOL program at a Canadian university. The purpose of this study is threefold: first, to contribute to the discussion of second

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4 A pseudonym for the institution where this study took place.

5 For reasons of confidentiality, links are not provided.
language (L2) academic discourse socialization in applied linguistics; second, to support a reconceptualization of TESOL programs in English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts to accommodate the diverse needs of the growing NNES student population; and finally, to benefit both NNES TESOL students and the programs/institutions by highlighting the academic discourse socialization processes of these students.

First of all, this study aims to contribute to the expanding literature on second language academic discourse socialization (Duff, 2003, 2007, 2010; Duff & Talmy, 2011; Morita & Kobayashi, 2008; Séror, 2008; Zappa, 2007; Zappa-Hollman & Duff, 2014), particularly in the academic discourse of NNESs in post-secondary institutions. A growing body of research has also been conducted by NNESs graduate students themselves in the last few years (e.g., Choi, 2007; Hassan, 2011; Her, 2005; Ilieva, 2010; Lin, 2011; Park, 2006). Many such studies chronicled the complex and unexpected nature of language socialization. Despite variations in the foci of these studies, the findings highlight the fact that the construction and negotiation of various identities and forms of discourse are salient and prevalent socialization experiences for many NNESs. For instance, while some of the NNESs considered themselves to be legitimate English professionals, some felt less confident and tried to establish their identities as legitimate members of their communities of practice (CoPs), as defined by Lave and Wenger (1991), a group of people who co-construct knowledge in a specific context and where situated learning would occur. Through various socialization instances in their graduate studies, their experiences and knowledge of the English language and discipline were validated over time.

In particular, by analyzing interview data as well as closely examining some of the discourse the participants encountered, this study tried to capture the perspectives of NNESs to investigate how they situated themselves in the graduate program and constructed and negotiated
their identities. Some other researchers have similarly attempted to gather emic perspectives from NNESs to reflect and articulate their socialization experiences in the field of TESOL through case studies (Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Morita, 2004; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999) while others have conducted ethnographic classroom-based studies (Lin, 2011; Morita, 2000) and narrative inquiries (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Pavlenko, 2003; Polio & Wilson-Duffy, 1998). Through longitudinal multiple-case studies with verbatim interview data and various other data sources, this study approached discourses as manifestations of social practices. Thus, the term “discourse” in this study exceeds linguistically-oriented definitions such as Richards and Schmidt’s (2002) that limit it to “language which has been produced as the result of an act of communication” (p. 160). I took a critical approach in understanding discourse (Fairclough, 2003, 2010; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) as it occurred in participant interviews wherein they recalled socialization instances, the participants’ writing (e.g., journals), and various other interactions with the participants or observed in class. Discourse in this study was analyzed as a form of social practice, a system of thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs expressed through language, both spoken and written, sometimes interactively shaped and co-constructed with others and sometimes formed more retrospectively alone (as in a personal journal). Discourse is a social process that legitimates and maintains power relations among people; this study hones in the ways in which discourse separates newcomers/novices from old timers/experts in various CoPs in language socialization.

Second, this current study is an attempt to suggest a reconceptualization of TESOL programs to meet the unique needs of the growing NNES student population (e.g., Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Park, 2006; Polio & Wilson-Duffy, 1998) with a particular focus on two significant groups of NNES attending North American universities: Koreans and Chinese. Earlier
studies inform us of gaps between the needs of NNES students and the curriculum of some TESOL programs. For instance, Lo (2001) asserted that (at least some) TESOL programs did not meet the needs of the NNES teachers upon return to their home countries in Asia (Taiwan), since the curriculum did not directly address the needs of students who are learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Instead, Lo suggested a collaborative model for a Master of Arts (MA⁶) TESOL program in the United States that would cater to this group of students. Even earlier, Liu (1998) had reported a gap between the TESOL curricula in western English-speaking countries and the local teaching contexts in the home countries of the NNES students. Liu further noted that a systematic approach to increasing students’ intercultural competence and improving their understanding of English-speaking cultures should be encouraged for a fuller and better outcome.

Still, many other studies discussed specific components of TESOL curricula that might help NNES students such as phonology (Murphy, 1997), teaching practicum (Baecher, 2012; Richards & Crookes, 1988), information literacy (Soules, Nielson, Lee, & Al Rifae, 2013), and pragmatics (Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009). However, none of these studies mentioned sociocultural or anthropological perspectives on L2 learning, a focus this present study emphasizes. By investigating how NNES students are socialized into approaching L2 learning from a sociocultural perspective, this study argues that shifting the locus of learning from learners receiving knowledge to collaborators co-constructing can help some NNESs cast off the static notions of themselves as simply NNESs and instead, view themselves as multicompetent users of their L2.

Among the two groups of NNES students who were recruited to participate in this study,

⁶ In this dissertation, both M.A. and MA will be used interchangeably to note a Master of Arts degree.
Korean students were welcomed for two additional reasons. First, in general, Korean first language (L1) students have received relatively little attention in academic ESL language and literacy studies compared to Chinese and Japanese L1 students (e.g., Duff, 2010; Morita, 2000, 2004; Shi & Beckett, 2002) despite their growing presence in ESL contexts, particularly in Canada. Korean students often bring distinct sociocultural, educational and linguistic experiences that distinguish them from Chinese and Japanese students; therefore, they might report different socialization experiences both individually and as a group. Second, I was motivated to conduct research based on my personal background and experiences (a detailed description of my positioning as researcher and researcher-participant are discussed in Chapter 4). Having been an English instructor in Korea and also a Korean international student in a graduate program in language education at a Canadian institution where considerable emphasis is placed on the sociocultural and critical aspects of language learning, I was drawn into and found myself committed to understanding the educational experiences of Korean students. In particular, I wanted to identify the unique needs of this population of TESOL students in Canada who would eventually be NNES teachers educating other NNES students in EFL contexts upon completion of their studies in Canada and their return to Korea (which has generally been the pattern of Korean master’s degree students in TESOL following their graduation from such programs).

Finally, in this time of intense internationalization in academic institutions in North America, this study seeks to help NNES TESOL students, as well as the programs, explore and become better informed about academic discourse socialization processes (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008). By investigating how this expanding group of students copes with academic demands in a new environment, particularly the demands pertaining to writing, this study offers insights into this population and their relevant academic CoPs. Learning about how NNES students are
socialized into academic writing in TESOL programs can benefit both students and programs, especially since writing, more than an exercise in grammar or syntax, is the co-constructive “discovery of meaning” (O’Brien, 2004, p. 6). Moreover, an absence of “explicit guidance in the expected ways of reasoning and writing” is “not uncommon in academia” (Currie, 1998, p. 6). In the end, this study aims to help these students make the best of their investment in higher education (Norton Peirce, 1995) in an ESL context.

In this vein, the following research questions guide this research:

1. What are some of the critical instances in socialization processes identified by NNES students in their first year of graduate studies, and how do such experiences impact their positioning of themselves in their program of study?

2. How do NNES graduate students in a TESOL program negotiate their identities as they switch roles from EFL teachers to ESL graduate students, and how do they participate in academic communities of practice?

3. How do NNES graduate students perceive their writing development through their socialization experiences in academic writing?

1.3 Significance of the study

This study contributes to and validates findings of a growing body of studies (e.g., Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Duff, 2003, 2008b, 2010; Morita & Kobayashi, 2008; Séror, 2008; Shi & Beckett, 2002; Zappa, 2007) that describes L2 socialization as a process which is complex, multidirectional, evolving, negotiated, and contested (Duff & Talmy, 2011). In particular, this study illustrates the unpredictability of language socialization, as demonstrated by some of the participants of this study. In their previous schooling in their home countries, many NNESs, including some of the participants of this study, were taught to approach language development from a more cognitive or psycholinguistic tradition (e.g., Krashen, 1981) which tends to promote
“ultimate attainment” (Birdsong, 1992) of the L2 through sufficient input and interaction. By contrast, the sociocultural perspectives (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978) introduce the concept of social co-construction of learning and provide a broader understanding and complementary interpretation of language learning. In fact, at first, the participants saw themselves as newcomers and not legitimate members of the academic CoP of TESOL students. It was not until later in their study that they constructed and negotiated their identities as fuller members of the academic community of English-speaking professionals, that is, after much more contestation of and resistance to academic literacy socialization of sociocultural perspectives of learning. After having been socialized into theories and various studies of TESOL/Applied Linguistics, many of the participants of this dissertation became more aware of the shortcomings in their academic literacy, particularly writing, and consequently became harsher judges of their own writing, a finding that clearly illustrates the complexity of language socialization.

This study also utilizes a discourse analysis approach, mainly using interview data (Talmy, 2011), to gain an in-depth understanding of how NNES students construct and negotiate their identities in their L2 socialization in graduate studies through their voice that is co-constructed by the interviewer's. Identity construction is an important part of language socialization, as it can impact students’ academic pursuits in a myriad of ways. Through interview discourse, I explored the lived experiences, current goals, and future trajectories of NNES graduate students in a TESOL program in relation to their academic language and literacy socialization in Canada. The participants’ experiences of reconceptualizing themselves or shifting their identities between expert and novice, as well as negotiating their multiple voices and identities (e.g., Gale, 1994; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Shen, 1989) in new CoPs of graduate students and studies, could add additional challenges to their language socialization and might
shift or shape their beliefs surrounding language learning and teaching in the long run. I paid particular attention to how they navigate their roles in a new context and how they implicitly and explicitly learn important information about linguistic, social, and institutional norms, as well as specific academic and social identities and behaviours, which are the hallmarks of language socialization. Because these students were and would continue to be teachers of English upon completion of their studies, their socialization into academic literacy in an ESL context was expected to have a considerable impact on their future practice as teachers.

1.4 Organization of the dissertation

This dissertation consists of eight chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework that guided this research, namely sociocultural theories and a language socialization approach specifically. In particular, their contributions to understanding and empowering L2 learners by conceptualizing learning as socially co-constructed rather than individually acquired will be highlighted. Also discussed is the relevance of language socialization to situated learning and other learning theories that conceive learning from a social viewpoint.

Chapter 3 reviews studies that deal with the language socialization of NNES graduate students in TESOL programs in an attempt to contextualize the current study as part of the discussion of the complex, multidirectional, and unpredictable nature of language socialization, even for seemingly strong NNES learners like TESOL graduate students. The studies are grouped into three categories based on similarities in focus and findings. The first group of studies focuses on construction and negotiation of various identities of NNES students in TESOL programs as part of their socialization experiences and how their expected trajectories after graduation shape their socialization. The next set of studies discusses various components of a
TESOL curriculum, as well as the gaps reported by some NNESs between the curriculum and their actual needs in EFL contexts. Finally, the third group of studies discusses issues and experiences NNES TESOL students face during their socialization into academic writing, including publication.

Chapter 4, the research methodology chapter, provides details regarding the qualitative, ethnographic, and multiple-case study approach, as well as the selected research design for this study. The chapter also discusses the research setting and participants, as well as various kinds of data that were collected and triangulated such as pre- and post-study questionnaire/interviews, interviews, and writing samples. It ends with ethical considerations including the discussions of the role of the researcher and member checks.

In the three chapters that follow (Chapters 5-7), the cases of five focal participants are introduced and then cross-analyzed based on similar themes that were salient in the analysis. Each chapter also addresses the key findings of the study by focusing on each of the three research questions.

Chapter 5 presents findings for the first research question, “What are some of the critical instances in socialization processes identified by NNES students in their first year of graduate studies, and how do such experiences impact their positioning of themselves in their program of study?” In this chapter, the profiles of the focal participants are introduced and their socialization experiences in the first year of their graduate program at NWU are analyzed. The particular focus is on the most salient socialization challenges they identified, such as being introduced to research (mostly for the participants in Master of Education (M.Ed.) program) and the gaps between the divergent expectations NNES graduate students brought with them and the actual demands of their graduate studies. Also discussed are their various understandings and
interpretations of what “being critical” or “critical thinking” mean; these variations demonstrate the influence of prior experience on the participants’ socialization processes.

Chapter 6 analyzes how NNES graduate students in a TESOL program constantly constructed, shifted, and negotiated their multiple and often hybrid identities in various contexts during their language socialization processes. In particular, it addresses the second research question through a close analysis of the participants’ discursive activities during interviews: "How do NNES graduate students in a TESOL program negotiate their identities as they switch roles from EFL teacher to ESL graduate student, and how do they participate in academic communities of practice?" This chapter also illustrates the sudden and acute realization of the participants’ non-native status due to differences in linguistic, sociocultural, and local contextual knowledge.

Taking up the third research question, “How do NNES graduate students perceive their writing development through their socialization experiences in academic writing?,” Chapter 7 explores language socialization processes pertaining to writing as reported by NNES graduate students and examines how NNES graduate students become academic writers by being socialized into the practices of producing academic writing. This chapter is organized around each participant. I present the findings from the pre-study questionnaire/interviews, followed by the findings from the post-study questionnaire/interviews in which participants reevaluated their writing skills as well as themselves as writers using the same set of questions. Discussions include some of the first academic writing challenges the participants encountered, such as American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines, their reception and interpretation of professors’ feedback on their writing, and their growing sense of themselves as academic writers. I also discuss a peer writing tutor program initiated by the department in an attempt to help
NNES students improve their writing in light of the complexities of language socialization.

The last chapter, Chapter 8, synthesizes the findings from all five of the individual cases and concludes the thesis by highlighting the major themes through cross-case analysis. While summarizing the language socialization processes of NNES graduate students in an ESL context as they reconstruct their identities and shift their positioning from established and experienced EFL teachers to novice graduate students in an ESL context, this chapter draws particular attention to the increasing need for more research on language socialization into academic discourse for TESOL students who may have higher sociocultural expectations to excel in their L2 compared to international students in other disciplines. In addition, the chapter discusses both the theoretical contributions of this study and its limitations. After implications, the chapter concludes with suggestions for future research and a personal reflection which emphasizes the ways in which understanding socialization as a contextual and fluid process can greatly benefit both students and institutions alike.
Chapter 2

LEARNING AS SOCIAL CO-CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING AND KNOWLEDGE

2.1 Introduction

With the increasing presence of NNES students in higher education in North America, the student population on North American campuses (as well as other parts of the world) is becoming more heterogeneous culturally and linguistically (American Council on Education, 2013; Morita & Kobayashi, 2008). To explore these changes, a number of studies have been conducted on NNES students (e.g., Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006, 2008; Cheung, 2010; Choi, 2007; Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Hassan, 2011; Ilieva, 2010; Lin, 2011; Morita, 2000, 2004; Park, 2006; Pavlenko, 2003; Rich & Troudi, 2006) mostly focusing on their L2 and literacy development. These studies are mainly informed by sociocultural theories or explicitly draw on a language socialization approach (Bronson & Watson-Gegeo, 2008) to better comprehend the holistic and complex enculturation processes of NNES students in their academic pursuit in a new sociocultural context.

This study also draws on language socialization, which builds upon a broader understanding of sociocultural theories (Duff, 2007). The aim of this chapter is to review the theories that the study is based on. First of all, I will briefly discuss sociocultural theories on learning and development, in particular, sociocultural theory (SCT), largely credited to Vygotsky (1978), and how sociocultural theories conceptualize knowledge as socially co-constructed and transformative rather than individually acquired. I seek to highlight how such epistemological underpinnings of sociocultural theories could actually empower the participating graduate TESOL students who were previously educators in an EFL setting. In other words, sociocultural
theories can provide an alternative and broader view on language learning as opposed to the psycholinguistic and cognitive views of L2 learning which tend to emphasize individual learning rather than collaborative and socially constructed learning. Coming from the former tradition, some L2 learners (mistakenly) focus on the acquisition of a set of linguistic rules and sometimes pursue ultimate attainment of native-like competency in their L2 rather than contextualizing their learning in their respective CoP.

In the second part of this chapter, I will survey language socialization which has inspired and guided my study towards understanding the learning experiences of NNES graduate TESOL students from a social and cultural viewpoint. I will then discuss the relevance of language socialization to situated learning and critical learning theories. A literature review of relevant studies on the language socialization of TESOL students will be provided in Chapter 3.

2.2 Sociocultural theories

2.2.1 Social co-construction as locus of learning

A growing number of second language acquisition (SLA) scholars have been taking an increasing interest in sociocultural aspects of SLA (see Atkinson, 2003; Casanave, 2002, 2003; Duff, 1995, 2002, 2010; Duff & Talmy, 2011; Lantolf & Thorne, 2004, among others). According to Swain and Deters (2007), there has been “a notable increase in research and theory that prioritize sociocultural and contextual factors in addition to acknowledging individual agency and multifaceted identities” (p. 820). Earlier, sociocultural aspects of L2 learning were also argued by Firth and Wagner (1997) when they called for a reconceptualization of SLA. This shift in focus from cognitive to collaborative and socially-situated learning helps position L2
learners as more active, socially engaged and situated agents of their own learning and also helps reveal their learning experiences in terms of social actions.

The most apparent and significant epistemological difference between cognitive and/or psycholinguistic theories and sociocultural theories lies in their focus on the locus of learning: the former examines the individual learner and the latter the social co-construction of people’s knowledge, performance, and identities. Cognitive and psycholinguistic theories claim that the internal factors of each learner drive the language learning process to a great extent and treat contextual factors involved in language acquisition as social variables. They construe individuals, more specifically, learners' mind to be the locus of learning and sociocultural variables as indirect or secondary influences. With its discourse of innate ability, interlanguage, ultimate attainment, competence and performance, cognitive and psycholinguistic theories see language learning as a more linear and deterministic process (Johnson, 2004; Zuengler & Miller, 2006).

By contrast, sociocultural theories shift the focus of learning from cognitive aspects of acquisition of knowledge to social engagements and practices that are then internalized, thereby considering learners-in-interaction as the more direct site of learning. In other words, by emphasizing contextual, interactional, and social dimensions of language acquisition as the main site and impetus of learning, sociocultural theories highlight the complex sociocultural factors that are in play in SLA (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). In fact, sociocultural theories, language socialization, and situated learning theory all regard social and contextualized learning as primary elements in language learning, and view learning as a process of acquiring and internalizing knowledge and practice through co-construction with other participants in various, often multiple and hybrid CoPs (Lave & Wenger, 1991).
Although some cognitive, linguistic, and/or psycholinguistically oriented theories might hint at the sociocultural nature of SLA (e.g., Dörnyei, 1994; Gardner, 2010), they fundamentally differ from sociocultural theories in that they tend to position individuals’ attitudes and motivation as the driving force behind language learning, coupled with learners’ innate ability to learn language. For instance, Dunn and Lantolf (1998) observed that Krashen’s (1981, 1982, 1985) notion of i+1 in the input hypothesis regards the provision of comprehensible linguistic input a little beyond the learner’s current competence as the main factor for linguistic development. In contrast, Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development (ZDP; Johnson, 2004) highlights the socially co-constructed nature of language development, particularly when learners are scaffolded by others. Although seemingly alike in the notion that learning occurs when learners are prompted a little beyond their competence and through scaffolding, they diverge considerably in their locus of learning: the former on individuals based on a kind of (ill-defined) linguistic developmental sequence and the latter on social co-construction (See Guk & Kellogg, 2007; Kinginger, 2001). In short, a basic tenet of sociocultural theories is that the learner is not viewed as an individual who is merely acquiring something that has already been established or is already being practiced through simple exposure, but rather an agent who is learning to transform the linguistic and social resources made available in his/her interaction with more competent learners.

In what follows, I summarize the development of sociocultural theories and the epistemological shaping of their foundation, which shifted the locus of learning from individual efforts to social engagement.
2.2.2 Principles of sociocultural theories

Although the locus of learning for sociocultural theories and language socialization is in the social co-construction of meaning making, Schieffelin and Ochs (1986) noted that the origin of sociocultural theories, in particular SCT (“Vygotskyan psychology”; Lantolf & Thorne, 2007), can be traced back to cultural historical psychology. Moreover, according to Lantolf (2004), “despite the label ‘sociocultural’ the theory is not a theory of the social or of the cultural aspects of human existence… it is, rather… a theory of mind… that recognizes the central role that social relationships and culturally constructed artifacts play in organizing uniquely human forms of thinking” (pp. 30-31).

As noted by Duranti and Goodwin (1992), Wittgenstein (1958) and early twentieth-century Russian scholars including Bakhtin (1981) and Vygotsky (1978) are considered some of the major forerunners in social theories in language and education. Wittgenstein (1958), for instance, viewed language as a form of action and considered “context as a point of departure” for understanding various thoughts and actions in the different language games individuals play (as cited in Duranti & Goodwin, 1992, p. 16). Casanave (2002) also employs the game metaphor for a similar notion that even knowledge is relative to the different communities in which it is practiced/used (citing Berger & Luckman, 1967) and therefore, “knowledge becomes… a ‘language game’ that is maintained through the interaction of community members” (p. 30). The use of the game metaphor highlights the fact that communication can signify various meanings depending on varied contextual factors.

Vygotsky (1978) has been highly influential in his notion of the “mediated relationship”, which emphasizes social context, construed as human interaction, as the source of cognition and
the foundation of development. His SCT foregrounds social factors over individual factors, and treats language as being socially constructed (Thorne, 2000). Although Vygotsky’s SCT was at first devised to see how children develop higher mental functions, its broad framework for understanding cognitive development as mediated through social interaction is in line with language socialization and situated learning, and provides a useful theoretical foundation for understanding the language learning processes of both children and adults. With this understanding, I will now turn to language socialization approaches that also situate the locus of learning in social co-construction.

2.3 Language Socialization

2.3.1 Historical and cultural shaping of social interaction

Ochs and Schieffelin (2008) stated that language socialization “encompasses socialization through language and socialization into language” (p. 4). Language socialization also stands for "a broad framework for understanding the development of linguistic, cultural, and communicative competence through interaction with others who are more knowledgeable or proficient" (Duff & Talmy, 2011, p. 95). In essence, unlike sociocultural theories, whose origin is in psychology, language socialization emerged from linguistic anthropology (Ochs, 1988; Schiefflin & Ochs, 1986). Language socialization typically draws on qualitative and ethnographic research methods and sociolinguistic approaches to language acquisition, with an interest in understanding how an individual develops to be a socially and culturally competent member of society. In other words, while both sociocultural theories and language socialization approaches situate social interaction as fundamental for learning, language socialization focuses less on psychological internalization, that is, cognitive development of individuals (Zuengler &
Miller, 2006), and takes a more holistic and integrative perspective on competence, though sometimes by examining just a small range of linguistic or cultural structures (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002). Moreover, language socialization studies pay considerable attention to the historical and cultural influences of social interaction for learning, drawing from fields such as sociology, sociolinguistics, anthropology, and education (Duff, 2010; Duff & Hornberger, 2008). In this regard, it can be said that language socialization is similar to the foundation of Vygotskian SCT, which is also known as cultural-historical psychology (Duff, 2007).

Language socialization has also been defined as “a set of densely interrelated processes realized to a great extent through the use of language… through which cultural knowledge is communicated and instantiated, negotiated and contested, reproduced and transformed” (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002, p. 339). As sharing the same “grammar” is neither sufficient nor necessary for two or more persons to communicate effectively (Hanks, 1996), language socialization is fundamentally concerned with how members or participants of particular communities use language as a fundamental medium in the development of one’s knowledge as well as sensibilities towards the social and cultural contexts they are situated in (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011); that is, language socialization focuses on the ways individuals learn to use language in socioculturally appropriate ways to co-construct meaningful and relevant meaning-making activities (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002).

Language socialization develops both at the macro-level such as in institutional, social, political, and cultural contexts as well as at the micro level like in individual and local contexts and behaviors (Duff, 2008). For example, Duff’s (1995) research, investigating an English-medium history class in a progressive Hungarian secondary school undergoing educational reform in the country’s (then) rapidly changing political climate, demonstrates the macro- (top-
down) and micro-level (bottom-up) language socialization practices that occurred simultaneously.

As Hungary was trying to distance itself from Soviet-oriented policies and authoritarianism, Hungarians adopted a more pro-Western curriculum and approach to teaching. At the macro level, some schools introduced English immersion (dual language) programs in their classrooms. Also, at the same time, classroom discourse included short student lectures and more discussions in addition to the traditional oral assessment known as the felelés (meaning ‘recitation’). At the level of individuals-in-interaction, a fine-tuned analysis of teacher-student corrections, for instance, including correction of teachers’ English by students, demonstrated micro-level transformations (Duff, 1995). Willett’s (1995) ethnographic study on interactional routines in phonics work in a first-grade classroom reflected macro level approach to language socialization. In investigating interactions and activities among ESL students with their classmates and adult aids, Willett uncovered the complex and often subtle construction of their social relations, identities, and ideologies. Among the four ESL students in the class, only one was a boy, the others girls. The boy was less integrated into the class and community culture than the girls, and was not viewed as a competent member in class, either academically and socioculturally. Willett asserted, "the micropolitics of gender and class worked to position the boy as a problematic learner and the girls as successful learners in this particular sociocultural setting" (p. 475).

At any rate, language socialization is a fluid and transformative process, that is constantly negotiated among and adjusted by participants. Furthermore, despite the apparent asymmetries in power and knowledge among participants, language socialization is “a bi- or multidirectional process” (Duff, 2010, p. 171) with some historical continuity across generations as well as change within and across social groups over time (Pontecorvo, Fasulo, & Sterponi, 2001). In simple terms, language socialization is a very complex process of human interaction.
2.3.2 Language socialization as situated practices

In line with the dominant ideas of sociocultural theories and language socialization that see learning as social and co-constructed, Lave and Wenger (1991) asserted that learning occurs by participating in situated practices, and further argued that learning generates social practice and the lived experience of social practice which, in turn, generates learning. In other words, they believe learning to be not just an acquisition of a set of cognitive skills and knowledge but as part of increasing participation in CoPs.

Similarly, Toohey (2000) viewed learning as participating in situated practices rather than acquiring mental schemata. Rogoff (1994) also defined learning as “a process of transformation through participation and keen observation” supported by the provision of guidance by “experts” in situated practices (p. 225). This idea of a distributed and co-constructed learning and apprenticeship in situated practices parallels with language socialization ideas that learning is never a one-way, expert-led process, but rather, it is contingent on interactions between the learner and more competent others (Duff, 2002, 2003, 2008b, 2010; Ilieva, 2010; Morita, 2000, 2004; Talmy, 2008, 2009).

2.3.3 Language socialization as complex processes

Duff (2003) cautioned that because traditional language socialization models were largely based on studies in monolingual and homogeneous communities (e.g., Shieffelin & Ochs, 1986), they can imply language socialization as an “inevitable, linear, accepted, expected, desired, facilitated and accommodated” (p. 313) process aided by experts who are willing “to assist, mentor, and accommodate [the novices] into the target culture and its practices” (p. 315). However, more recent language socialization studies with wider varieties of learners and settings
such as multilingual learners in multicultural contexts (Duff, 2005, 2008b, 2010) suggest that the outcomes and process of language socialization are much more complex. They can include non-conformity, rejection, partial and multiple community membership and are often marked by progress as well as setbacks. After all, language socialization is a lifelong and lifewide process (Duff, 2008c; Duff & Talmy, 2011) that encompasses a considerable range of practices and experiences as inexhaustible and as complicated as the human world. For instance, the learner immersed in language socialization needs to be socialized into “cultural and social practices, values, and ideologies, such as those concerning … gender, morality, knowledge and language itself” (Paugh, 2005, p. 57).

Moreover, Garrett and Baquedano-Lopez (2002) noted “ideologies are not uniform within any given social group, but rather are multiple, situated, and interested, i.e. rooted in individual experiences of the social order that vary with class, age, gender, etc.” (p. 354). As language practices are more political than neutral, it is important that we review the general assumptions of critical approaches to language learning to expand our understanding of the social and political dimensions of language learning (Zuengler & Miller, 2006).

2.3.4 Critical approaches: Politics and power in language learning

In order to better situate the current study, I review the basic premise of a critical theoretical approach in this section because language socialization is a co-constructive process in which people negotiate meanings "through the use of language to use language" appropriately within the situated context (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 184). In addition to negotiating their identities, learners often navigate political and power relations in the process.
Pennycook (2001) asserted that a critical approach means “taking social inequality and social transformation as central” (p. 6) in dealing with inequalities in, but not limited to, politics, class, race, or gender. Morita and Kobayashi (2008) noted, “critical perspectives have explored how sociocultural, historical, and institutional forces, particularly in terms of power relations, impact disciplinary socialization, as well as how individuals accommodate or resist such forces in different ways” (p. 245). In other words, this approach views learning as dealing with the power structure and interpersonal relations in which all socialization is embedded. For researchers adhering to a critical theoretical paradigm (e.g., Canagarajah, 2002; Gee, 2011; Kubota, 2009a, 2009b; Luke, 1995; Norton, 1997, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2001; Phillipson, 1992, 2010; Tollefson, 1995), the question for research is not “what is true?” but “how is truth constructed and exploited in the field of English language teaching?” (Kubota, 1999a, p. 752). Norton and Toohey (2004) further noted that L2 language researchers following this approach are “interested in relationships between language learning and social change” [and] perceive language “not simply a means of expression or communication [but] … a practice that constructs, and is constructed by, the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future” (p. 1).

For instance, Bourdieu (1991), a forerunner in understanding the political implications of language use, introduced the notion of “habitus” to describe people’s “socially constructed dispositions” (p. 37) arguing that certain linguistic forms and practices including English education grant symbolic capital in the linguistic market. South Korean schooling practices are a good example of power at play. They are deeply influenced by larger social and political contexts such as the high-stakes college entrance exam, which often control the nation-wide curriculum and even play a role in changing some of the basic social platforms of the society (J-
K. Kim, 2002). This approach is a critical and important part of investigating the learner’s status quo in their language learning, especially in macro, societal understandings of language socialization.

In this chapter, I surveyed socially co-constructed, socioculturally and critically informed approaches to language learning, namely sociocultural theories and language socialization. I then discussed communities of practice approaches to learning followed by a discussion of critical approaches. In the following literature review chapter, recent studies focused on the language socialization of NNES graduate students in TESOL will be discussed to illustrate the contingent and socially constructed nature of language socialization processes, and provide context for the ways in which these students negotiate, resist or are enculturated into new academic communities of TESOL graduate programs.
Chapter 3

SOCIALIZATION EXPERIENCES OF NNES GRADUATE STUDENTS IN TESOL PROGRAMS

In order to contextualize the study, this chapter reviews the relevant literature to understand language socialization processes of NNES TESOL graduate students in a new sociocultural and academic context from a socially-situated viewpoint.

NNESs in TESOL programs in English speaking countries represent 36% of the students enrolled in TESOL programs in the United States (Llurda, 2005). At the same time, studies on TESOL NNES graduate students and their academic socialization experiences in an ESL context have also been on the rise. In particular, an emerging body of research, mostly available as Ph.D. dissertations, has been conducted by NNES graduate students themselves (e.g., Choi, 2007; Hassan, 2011; Ilieva, 2010; Lin, 2011; Park, 2006). Other researchers have investigated NNES socialization into TESOL programs using case study (Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Morita, 2004; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999), ethnography (Morita, 2000; Lin, 2011), and narrative approaches (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Pavlenko, 2003; Polio & Wilson-Duffy, 1998). Some of these studies suggest that TESOL programs revise their curricula to meet the unique needs of the growing NNES student population (e.g., Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Park, 2006; Polio & Wilson-Duffy, 1998).

This chapter reviews studies addressing the socialization experiences of NNES graduate students in TESOL programs in three groups. The first group focuses on the ways in which NNES students in TESOL programs negotiated and constructed various identities and explores the impact of these processes on their identity as L2 teachers after graduation. The second group explores the need for TESOL programs to be reconceptualized to better serve the increasing
NNES student population. Finally, the third group of studies deals with the issues and experiences of NNES TESOL students in their socialization in academic writing including publication. By reviewing relevant literature, I contextualize my study in the discussion of the complex, multidirectional, and unpredictable nature of language socialization even for seemingly strong NNES learners like TESOL graduate students. I also intend to identify a gap that can be filled by this current study, namely, how socioculturally informed learning theories and socialization into various conventions in graduate studies could potentially disempower NNESs (rather than empowering them) apprenticing to a CoP when they conflict with their prior education and experience.

3.1 Negotiation and construction of TESOL graduate student identity

3.1.1 NESs and NNESs dichotomy

An important issue that emerged from research on NNES students in TESOL programs concerns the construction and negotiation of various identities in their socialization process. For instance, four studies (Choi, 2007; Hassan, 2011; Park, 2006; Rich & Troudi, 2006) explored how the idea of race and non-nativeness contributes to NNES students’ socialization experiences. These studies highlight the discourse of the contested dichotomy of NESs and NNESs in TESOL programs and in the TESOL profession (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001; Cook, 1991, 1999; Davies, 1991, 2003; Liu, 1999; Paikeday, 1985; Piller, 2002; Rampton, 1990), suggesting that professional competence can strengthen NNESs’ identity as legitimate and contributing members of the TESOL community.

In her doctoral dissertation, Park (2006) chronicled both the personal and professional lives of five NNES female students from East Asia who had recently embarked on their graduate studies in a TESOL program in the United States. Informed by critical and feminist theory,
Park’s case study explored the lived experiences of these students and their reflections on their present experiences as well as future prospects. Based on autobiographical narratives, journal entries, in-depth interviews, and informal conversations, the researcher analyzed the data in relation to the past, present, and future life trajectories of the participants. Despite the fact that they were considered privileged to study abroad by their peers at home, the study reported the varying degrees of marginalization these women encountered due to their race, gender, and (often low) linguistic abilities. For example, Han Nah Jung, a Korean female student, recalled that it was a rare opportunity for a Korean female like herself to study abroad in the United States in the 1990s. However, instead of accepting their newly ascribed identities, these participants tried to negotiate or resist some of the practices of their discourse communities. They, for example, resisted being labeled as NNES while trying to establish themselves as TESOL professionals. In sum, the participants found that active participation in ESL teaching opportunities such as pre-service or volunteer teaching experiences helped them construct an identity as developing English language teachers rather than as less competent NNES TESOL students.

In another doctoral study, Hassan (2011) reported similar findings based on a narrative inquiry exploring nine NNES graduate students’ experiences in their TESOL program. Unlike Park (2006) whose study did not refer to the NES/NNES dichotomy, Hassan’s study explored the TESOL graduate program with prospective teachers as a locus for interactions contributing to (or working against) the NES/NNES dichotomy in the TESOL field. Specifically, Hassan examined the NNES graduate students’ participation and negotiation processes, academic socialization, in their TESOL program in terms of how they interacted with professors and classmates, handled course content, and experienced learning outside their courses. Hassan first conducted
questionnaires to gather participants’ comments and opinions related to NES/NNES issues. She then conducted individual interviews with nine participants and followed up in more in-depth interviews with three of them. Compared to Park’s (2006) study, which involved five East Asian women, Hassan had a much wider variety of participants with different L1 backgrounds such as Arabic, Thai, Russian, Chinese, and Japanese. Hassan’s findings largely echoed Park’s (2006) that NNESs did not simply embrace the practices and knowledge of their discourse communities, but rather, negotiated and sometimes resisted them. For example, Su, a former teacher from Korea, was sharply aware of her non-nativeness and spent countless hours preparing for class in order to position herself as a competent member of the program. Another participant, a male student from Thailand, was confident in his non-native-like English writing and published two of his studies in English in a Thai journal on English learning. Likewise, the participants’ socialization experiences in their respective TESOL programs varied depending on the availability of assistance, support, and opportunities. Finally, the study illustrated how NNESs’ socialization experiences in the TESOL program could contribute to empowering or disempowering students as they tried to construct their social identity as legitimate NNES teachers in the TESOL discourse community in the future. In the end, Hassan suggested a number of alternative terms for NNES such as “second language speaking professionals, English teachers speaking other languages, non-native speakers of English in TESOL, non-native English speaking professionals, second language teaching professionals, and non-native English teacher” (p. 29). In other words, Hassan was suggesting identities that encompass many possibilities rather than deficiency in these students.

Choi’s (2007) research also discussed dichotomized notions of NESs and NNESs in TESOL programs. Like Rich and Troudi (2006), Choi noted the prevalence of the idea that
people of a certain race are better suited to teach English than others. Such an idea, as Choi argued, has a subtle but definite effect on NNES students’ thoughts and belief system regarding what constitutes an English teacher. Choi’s study involved three NNESs students in the TESOL program in the United States who were also teaching an academic writing course on campus as university teaching assistants. With a focus on the participants’ construction of a professional teacher identity in an ESL context, Choi investigated how these NNESs negotiated the multiple and sometimes contradictory discourses of being “an English teacher”. For instance, one of the participants noted that only NESs or individuals with a degree from an institution in a country where English is widely spoken could be (legitimate) English teachers whereas another participant suggested that only those with ample experience in an ESL context could be ESL teachers. Choi followed the three NNES student teachers for eight months collecting various qualitative data such as written reflective logs, responses to a questionnaire, field notes from classroom observations, interviews, and email correspondences. Findings suggested that despite the shared NNES teacher identity, the three teachers demonstrated varying degrees of understanding of themselves as English teachers based on their prior experience (i.e., their unique life histories and linguistic and cultural backgrounds). For example, Sara, a relatively less experienced teacher from Korea, did not consider herself a competent teacher because an ideal English teacher in Korea, from her experience, should be “white and typically American” (p. 107). Although she was teaching in the United States alongside NES and NNES colleagues, she recalled “being treated as a second-class citizen compared to native speakers of English when tutoring in Korea” (p. 107). All in all, the participants spoke to the importance of institutional support for NNESs in their TESOL teacher educational program. In fact, the participants noted that receiving support and trust from their supervisors (as argued in Chamberlin, 2000) helped
them conceive of themselves as competent and qualified teachers of English.

Compared to the three previous studies mentioned (Choi, 2007; Hassan, 2011; Park, 2006), Rich and Troudi’s (2006) study highlighted how not only non-nativeness but also racialization may contribute to the construction of NNES identity and “an experience of Othering” (p. 615). The study involved five male Muslim students from Saudi Arabia in a TESOL program in the United Kingdom following the July 7, 2005 bombings in London. Rich and Troudi’s study inquired to what extent these Arab Muslim students perceived racialization as TESOL students in the United Kingdom. Although they were all different, unique individuals, their visible racial and religious qualities, that is, their Middle Eastern Muslim identity, seemed to overshadow all other qualities during this period of political and racial tension. For instance, Ahmed, one of the participants of the study, claimed that the recent political events and Islamophobia that quickly spread around the country increased the significance of race in the construction of his identity over other identifiers such as TESOL student status. He noted that his identity shifted from “an international M.Ed. student” (his initial construction of his identity) to a TESOL student and a Muslim, “but mostly [a] Muslim” (p. 621).

3.1.2 Reconceptualization of the NES and NNES dichotomy

Similar to the aforementioned studies, three other studies (Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Lin, 2011; Pavlenko, 2003) also foregrounded the construction and development of professional (i.e., teacher) identities by NNES TESOL graduate students. Differing from the above-mentioned studies that highlighted the dichotomized notion of NESs and NNESs, these studies argued for a reconceptualization of the NES and NNES dichotomy by viewing NNESs not as less competent speakers of English compared to NESs, but as multicompetent speakers and teachers of English.

In her narrative inquiry, which used autobiographical data from 44 MA TESOL students,
Pavlenko (2003) argued for reimagining teacher identities in a TESOL program. The participants ranged between 22 and 78 years old and had diverse ethnic, racial, and linguistic backgrounds. As part of their course requirements, the students were asked to write about their own language learning and teaching experiences, linking them to issues and concepts discussed in their SLA class. After collecting their linguistic autobiographies, Pavlenko employed a narrative inquiry using the theory of discursive positioning (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & Langenhove, 1999) to evaluate and characterize actions and events based on terms and metaphors provided by the participants. For instance, Jung and Jihae, both from Korea, saw their membership in the TESOL community “as [a] lifelong and unsuccessful ‘struggle’” (p. 257), as they were previously socialized into believing that they needed “to acquire a native-like competence” (p. 257). Pavlenko asserted that instead of the discourse of linguistic competence that tends to dichotomize TESOL students into NES or NNES, a notion of multicompetence (Cook, 1999) should be considered. This shift in discourse would provide an alternative imagined community of multicompetent and multilingual speakers and allow NNESs to construe themselves as legitimate L2 users rather than incompetent speakers of the target language.

In the same vein, Golombek and Jordan (2005) embraced constructs like multicompetence in a TESOL program which would empower NNESs and their construction of a legitimate teacher identity. Based on case studies of two Taiwanese students in a TESOL program in their first year and data composed of interviews and reaction papers written in a pronunciation pedagogy course challenging the NES myth, Golombek and Jordan found that although these students acknowledged the heavy influence of the native speaker myth (Phillipson, 1992), they realized that they could establish their legitimacy as speakers and teachers of English through various means and resources such as acquiring content knowledge.
and reconceptualizing their competence. Shao-mei, one of the participants of the study who previously believed in the NES/NNES dichotomy, realized that ESL learners should not simply mimic the speech of NESs but speak in a way that represents their own identities. Also, the two participants noted that competent TESOL teachers should be recognized by their ability to identify and meet the needs of their students, not on their ability to approximate native pronunciation.

Likewise, Lin’s (2011) dissertation study reports that some socioculturally informed perspectives in language learning and teaching positively influenced the identity construction of NNES teachers as legitimate and competent members of the TESOL community. In her ethnographic case study of two NES teachers and two NNES teachers over one academic year, Lin investigated how participants’ professional identity as English teachers was constructed by discourses in the program and how their native or non-native status might have affected their socialization processes and teaching practices. Echoing a finding in Pavlenko’s (2003) study, Lin observes that some individuals in her study came to view themselves as multilingual and multicompetent NNES teachers and members of the TESOL community rather than NNESs who speak less than target-like English. The findings of her study illustrate that authoritative discourses represented by the curricular design, the selected readings and theories, as well as the practicum requirements of the program influenced and guided the identity construction of student teachers to some extent. For instance, when students were discussing psycholinguistically oriented studies on how to help NNESs acquire more native-like pronunciation, both Terri, a mature NES who was trained in a more traditional paradigm of language learning, and Mei, an NNES teacher from China, noted their keen awareness of differences in competence among NNES teachers. However, when dealing with more socioculturally informed studies, the NNES
graduate students felt empowered and saw themselves more competent learners and teachers of English.

3.1.3 The multidirectionality and unpredictability of socialization

As shown in the aforementioned studies, construction and negotiation of identity in socialization experiences are often individualized and particular even among the NNESs who share similar schooling, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Three other studies have examined the multidirectionality and unpredictability of socialization (Ilieva, 2010; Morita, 2000, 2004) which are discussed below.

First of all, Morita’s (2000) study demonstrates that socialization is a “complex and conflictual process of negotiation,” not “a predictable, unidirectional process of enculturation” (p. 279). Taking an ethnographic approach, the study consisted of 40 classroom observations in two different TESOL courses in an eight-month period focusing on oral academic presentations (OAP), interviews with students and instructors, and open-ended questionnaires. Morita’s findings suggest that both NESs and NNESs gradually apprenticed into OAPs as they prepared and performed their presentations, observed others doing it, and reviewed their own and others’ performances. The study suggests that academic discourse socialization is a complex process of negotiation. Instead of following a seemingly representative or model OAP, individual students used different means and methods. For instance, one experienced former elementary teacher from Japan used a series of group activities rather than a conventional OAP to engage the other students and demonstrate his expertise in teaching. On the other hand, another student discussed only theory in his OAP because he believed that a detailed discussion of theory was needed to reflect the content of the course.

In another study, Morita (2004) investigated how NNES Japanese graduate students
negotiated their participation and constructed their identity in class discussions. Morita conducted multiple case studies of six female Japanese students, two of them in the TESOL program and two others in educational studies. Her findings suggest that, generally speaking, the NNESs from Japan faced a major obstacle in establishing and negotiating their identities and in being recognized as competent and legitimate members of their classroom communities, but the process and the degree of their identity construction varied not only among individuals but also in different contexts for the same individual. For instance, Lisa, a TESOL graduate student and a former high school teacher in Japan, felt the pressure to speak up in all of her classes, which she found to be face-threatening as she considered her English to be “imperfect” (p. 585). However, after studying in the program, particularly in a class where NNES abilities were discussed with an emphasis on multicompetence rather than deficiency, she came to see herself in a more positive light. On the other hand, a student in educational studies had two very different identities in two classes. In the class where she experienced no major conceptual challenges, she was active and contributed to class discussions. However, in the class that covered unfamiliar theoretical content, she could not actively or meaningfully participate and felt “ignored” (p. 593). These cases exemplify how NNESs’ agency and negotiation of their identity are locally constructed. The fact that students might construct their identity differently in a given classroom reflects the multidirectionality and unpredictability of their socialization processes.

Ilieva’s study (2010) also demonstrates the multidirectionality and unpredictability in students’ socialization. The study reports on 20 NNES teachers, all from China and all relatively new to teaching English at a Canadian university. She investigated the NNES teachers’ professional identity construction through their end-of-program portfolios which contained the participants’ views on the educational theories they learned and the practices that they had
developed in the program. The researcher noted that newly acquired and socioculturally informed discourses in the program offered some new options for students’ professional identity construction, and many of the students in her study tended to associate “being a teacher with doing teaching” (p. 362) (italics in original). For instance, one of the participants, Kathryn, a student from China, noted that her study in the TESOL program taught her to teach English “from a social justice perspective, i.e., to incorporate questions of face, gender, linguistic imperialism, and so forth into the language curriculum” (p. 357). On the other hand, another TESOL student, Jun, was more careful in the application of her newly acquired knowledge in a classroom in China upon her return. In short, although these two students acquired a more socially informed perspective in language teaching, their approach and identity construction were not identical.

All in all, the ten studies reviewed above report the ways in which NNES identities are constructed and negotiated. Four studies (Choi, 2007; Hassan, 2011; Park, 2006; Rich & Troudi, 2006) discuss how NNES students perceive, resist, and negotiate NES/NNES dichotomy, whereas other studies (Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Lin, 2011; Pavlenko, 2003) argued for the empowerment of NNESs as legitimate users and multicompetent members of the TESOL community. In addition, studies like Ilieva (2010), Morita (2000, 2004), and Lin (2011) emphasized the multidirectionality and unpredictability of socialization with a focus on identity construction. Despite their shared NNES identity, participants’ identity construction in socialization processes were shaped differently by their prior experiences and future trajectories as well as the specific context in which they were situated at the time. This finding problematizes the static definition and identity of NNESs, a topic I will discuss in Chapter 6: Negotiation of identities as socialization practice.
3.2 TESL/TESOL7 curriculum and the needs of NNESs

3.2.1 TESOL curriculum

In this section, studies that explore the TESOL curriculum and how it may or may not meet the expectations and demands of NNESs will be reviewed. For NNESs who study in TESOL programs, socialization includes acculturating to the program, its curriculum, or individual classes. Gaps between what they learn and what they would like to or need to learn in order to be considered a competent English teacher in future job markets could be problematic.

Each TESOL program tends to be unique, and depending on the degree program (e.g., M.Ed., M.A., or M.A.T. (Master of Arts in Teaching), the local context, the student demographics, and institutional and student goals, the curricula of these programs are bound to be different. However, in order to equip their students to be competent TESOL educators, “most reputable schools” teach and/or require some of the following courses (Bagwell, 2014, pp. 2-4):

- Foundations in/general introduction to TESOL
- Methods and/or theory course
- Second language acquisition (usually for MA students)
- Structure of English/English grammar
- Assessment
- Language and culture (This course is intended to narrow the gap between what some TESOL students have been taught in their home country and what they may experience in the countries in which they will be teaching).
- Curriculum and materials design
- Research methods (as most universities encourage their students to research the field of TESOL).

Most programs also require their students to complete a culminating project or projects such as an internship/practicum, portfolio/capstone project, and/or thesis. However, even with a broad

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7 As mentioned in Chapter 1, Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) and Teaching of English to the Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) are used rather interchangeably in these studies, but TESOL is used uniformly throughout this dissertation other than when noting a specific program.
spectrum of classes, some of the pressing needs of NNESs might not be addressed because their needs and expectations are not necessarily universal.

Focusing on the gap between the TESOL program and the needs of the students, Lo (2001) investigated four cases of NNES TESOL graduates who studied in the United States and returned to their home countries to teach: three Taiwanese and one Thai student. The interview-based study asked the following questions: How did this TESOL program adequately prepare them to be EFL teachers? What were the factors that deterred their pursuit of fulfilling their needs and expectations? and What recommendations did they have for MA TESOL programs? Lo found that the TESOL programs did not meet the needs of the participating NNES teachers upon return to their home countries since the curriculum did not directly address the current needs of EFL students. The study suggests a collaborative model for an MA TESOL program that can cater to this growing number of students. Similarly, Liu (1998) indicated a gap between what NNESs learn while studying TESOL in western English-speaking countries and local teaching contexts in their home country upon their return. He particularly emphasized the importance of improving TESOL students’ proficiency which he asserted was needed for success in their future career and proposed that TESOL programs institute a systematic approach to helping them learn about myriad cultures in hopes of raising TESOL students’ intercultural competence.

Nevertheless, some researchers focus on what they see as the essential components of a TESOL curriculum. For instance, Murphy (1997) argued for offering effective phonology courses to better equip future teachers of English to make “sound instructional decisions” (p. 743) when they encounter L2 learners’ speech intelligibility needs. He conducted a questionnaire survey on 70 TESOL programs to investigate the objectives, content, and learning tasks of their
phonology courses. At the time of the study, there were 195 master’s degree programs in TESOL in the United States, and 105 programs offered some form of phonology courses while the remaining 90 programs did not have any phonology course, indicating considerable variation in the preparation of TESOL teachers. Analyses of the course outlines revealed that emphasis in content also varied considerably from segmentals (i.e., individual phonemes) to suprasegmental levels (i.e., intonation, primary stress, etc). Despite the varied topics each program covered, the discourse of sociolinguistic awareness was absent. All the programs aimed at native-like pronunciation, and their main purpose was to help NNESs sound like native speakers so that they can also help their students do the same.

Richards and Crookes (1988), and later Crookes (2003) report on the importance of the practicum in the TESOL program. Richards and Crookes (1988) argued that regardless of the site or focus of any TESOL program, the importance of the experience gained by practicum is increasingly recognized. They also noted that because of little information on the effectiveness of practicum practices was available, “theory sometimes wins out over practice” (p. 9). Their study sent out 120 questionnaires to TESOL programs in the United States, and received 78 responses, 19 of which indicated that the programs contained no practicum. Practicum practices included a wide variety of approaches, such as campus-based experiences like teaching in an English language institute program at the university and field-based experiences like teaching in a high school. Some practica were observed, supervised, and even recorded while others were done with little supervision. Richards and Crookes (1988) asserted that the importance of the experience gained by practicum is increasingly recognized regardless of the variations in practicum approaches. Later, Crooks (2003) argued that practicum can help prospective teachers to set goals related to improving their teaching; moreover, experiences in a practicum may
prompt them to question, articulate, and reflect on their own teaching and the assumptions and values they bring from their prior beliefs and educational experiences.

In a more recent study, Baecher (2012) asserted that providing “clinical experiences” (practicum) along with coursework is essential to producing “not just highly qualified but ‘highly effective’ teachers” (p. 537). She investigated a curriculum revising process particularly focusing on practicum before and after its execution at a large university with about 130-150 TESOL teacher candidates who were active in some types of practicum activity each term. Baecher conducted a document analysis of field notes, written reflections, and presentations generated by the five full-time and three adjunct faculty members involved in the curricular revision. Findings reveal that practicum benefits TESOL standards to ensure more cohesion among courses, enriching pre-service experiences, and helping teacher candidates to develop needed job skills. In other words, it is an important part of academic and linguistic socialization in TESOL.

Baecher (2012) further argued that making connections between theory and practice through practicum is essential and has the added benefit of including inputs from some part-time instructors who might be experts in K-12 contexts; forming these connections is particularly needed in TESOL programs that draw faculty members from various disciplines such as bilingual education and linguistics.

Different from the above studies, Soules, Nielsen, Lee, and Al Rifae (2013) presented an important aspect of students’ acculturation to graduate studies: acquisition of information literacy. In order to aid graduate students in an MA TESOL program in writing their theses, Soules et al. (2013) conducted an information competency survey assessing students’ needs, gave library orientation sessions, and collected 124 reflective essays from the three introductory MA
TESOL classes these students were taking part in. The researchers observed that more knowledge and practice in information literacy enriched these students’ learning experiences in the program and better equipped them to complete their further academic work and meet future teaching demands. For instance, Lee, one of the researchers, noted that plagiarism was sometimes due to a lack of information literacy rather than a simple decision to copy another’s work without properly citing it, and that information literacy training was useful form of additional support for NNESs. Al Rifae also argued that learning about information literacy not only fulfilled his practical needs, but also had a psychological impact on him by helping him think of himself more as a competent M.A. student in the TESOL program. Soules et al. claimed that in Australian universities, embedding information literacy in the curriculum was far more common than in the United States and called for the inclusion of information literacy as a part of TESOL curricula in the United States as well.

In light of the increased attention to the sociocultural aspects of TESOL, Vasquez and Sharpless (2009) highlighted the role of pragmatics in TESOL programs. They defined pragmatics as the proper use of the language in socially appropriate ways and argued that it needs to be taught in the TESOL program because making a pragmatic error can misrepresent a speaker’s intention and lead to negative judgments on the speaker. Out of the 104 directors or graduate advisors of TESOL master’s programs in the United States the researchers contacted, 94 participated in a survey investigating their beliefs, attitudes, and opinions about the focus on pragmatics in TESOL programs. They found that pragmatics is covered in many different courses such as discourse analysis, teaching methodology, and sociolinguistics, to name a few, but the time dedicated to the discussion of pragmatics was highly variable. Moreover, most of the pragmatics courses were electives rather than required courses. Respondents noted that there
was a lack of pragmatics textbooks tailored for TESOL students focusing more on applied and practical pragmatics rather than theoretical pragmatics. Vasquez and Sharpless (2009) concluded that regardless of the degree to which programs emphasize pragmatics, it should be actively and consciously addressed so that TESOL students can acquire thorough professional knowledge about it.

In this section, six studies that dealt with different components of TESOL curricula, namely phonology, practicum, information literacy, and pragmatics were discussed to offer implications for better equipping future L2 teachers. Also discussed were discrepancies some NNES TESOL students reported between the TESOL curriculum and their future needs in EFL contexts. In what follows, academic writing, a major socialization challenge for many of NNES TESOL graduate students, will be discussed.

**3.3 Challenges for NNES TESOL graduate students in their socialization in academic writing**

This section highlights some studies that report concerns identified for NNES TESOL graduate students regarding challenges particularly focused on writing. While it is not intended to review extensive literature on each issue raised, this section will discuss studies dealing with TESOL graduate students and their challenges in writing to illustrate the gap in the literature that this dissertation attempts to address: writing challenges faced by NNES TESOL graduate students could disempower them as language users, graduate students, and educators.

Although graduate students in other disciplines might face similar difficulties in adapting to institutional practices and expectations, TESOL graduate students, as future teachers of English (Butler, 2004), face a number of challenges including the much-discussed linguistic
challenges, the complex issue of plagiarism, proper citation of sources, and, in some cases (particularly for doctoral students), pressure to publish. The topic of plagiarism as identity construction and as an institutional practice will be discussed followed by discussion of practices in publication. Narratives of former NNES graduate students who are now established scholars in TESOL will also be presented to provide participants' views on their L2 writing socialization in graduate programs.

3.3.1 Learning proper citation to avoid plagiarism

Abasi, Akbari, and Graves (2006) addressed the complex issues of plagiarism NNES graduate students face. They conducted case studies of five NNES graduate students including two MA TESOL students and two students in other programs in Education who were all receiving assistance from a writing center at a Canadian university. By examining semi-structured interviews, drafts, and final drafts of written assignments as well as course syllabi, they traced how these NNES graduate students established their identities as writers by appropriating others’ ideas and words. Their findings revealed that while less experienced writers (two TESOL students) would just follow the instructions and considered writing more of an “isolated mental activity” (p. 106), more experienced writers employed various ways to legitimate their authorial stance. For instance, through citation and referencing, they would indicate their intertextual knowledge (i.e., demonstrate their knowledge of the topic and the field). At the same time, some students cited very little to demonstrate that the content of the paper was mainly their own and not someone else’s. The study also noted that that most instances of plagiarism were unintended and that students learned to cite more effectively as they became better socialized into the program and discipline. In other words, the researchers interpreted the plagiarism that occurred as an “issue of learning and development” (p. 114).
In 2008, Abasi and Graves published another study focusing on the issue of plagiarism that included a bigger player, university policies, as their research views academic writing as social practice, an argument made in by Barton and Hamilton (1998) and Gee (1996) earlier. Abasi and Graves conducted in-depth interviews with four NNES graduate students, including two students in the Faculty of Education; additionally, they conducted in-depth interviews with three professors from the courses the students took as well as twelve more professors from the students’ academic programs. The results of this study confirmed the previous (Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006) findings: inappropriate citation was largely a learning issue often resulting from such difficulties as the course context, students’ linguistic competence, and time pressure, and citation could improve as students’ socialization into the disciplines progressed. Abasi and Graves (2008) also noted that after signing a “Fraud Declaration” (p. 229) highlighting the consequences of plagiarism, some students became excessively preoccupied with referencing sources and responded by relying too heavily on cited materials in their writing.

Beyond the more localized issues like plagiarism and institutional practices, there is pressure placed on TESOL graduate students to legitimatize their membership in their field: that is, conduct research and publish. In what follows, some studies that deal with publication, especially those by TESOL students or TESOL professionals, will be discussed.

3.3.2 Graduate students and publication and beyond

Graduate students are increasingly pressured to publish research in order to gain a competitive edge in the job market. Some institutions (e.g., Tufts University8) including the site for this study, NWU, are encouraging their graduate students to publish while in the program.

8 Graduate Student Guide to Publishing Your Research (https://sites.tufts.edu/gradmatters/2012/02/08/graduate-student-guide-to-publishing-your-research/)
Cheung (2010), Belcher (2007), and Shi (2002a) all discussed publishing in English-medium journals by NNESs. Although Belcher’s and Shi’s studies do not directly address publishing while in graduate school, they deserve discussion as they investigate how NNES TESOL graduate students seek legitimate professional acceptance as published authors after graduation.

In her 2010 study, Cheung investigated how some NNES doctoral students in applied linguistics attempted to publish in an English medium journal. Cheung conducted in-depth interviews with six doctoral students from three different institutions in Hong Kong at different stages of their program who had all been published in refereed journals. Cheung’s findings suggest that these students employed commonly known strategies when submitting their paper such as selecting areas of study they were familiar with, which was often their dissertation topics, reading past issues of their target journal to familiarize themselves with styles and trends, and getting help from their dissertation supervisors mostly on issues of argumentation. Cheung also noted that students appreciated and benefitted from receiving comprehensive written feedback and suggestions for improvements to their manuscripts rather than acceptance/rejection responses often sent by editors of Chinese language journals. Cheung further emphasized the importance of strong support from dissertation supervisors in helping these students’ enculturation into publication.

Shi (2002a) examined publication practices of western-trained NNES TESOL scholars in China. 14 professors of English (TESOL) in seven universities in China were interviewed about their publication experiences in both English and Chinese language journals. She reported that although all the western-trained scholars who participated in the study were committed to publishing, most of their studies were published in local Chinese language journals. Some participants admitted that they were frustrated by the disadvantages they faced because they had
not published their work in mainstream Western journals. Nevertheless, they tended to follow the academic journal writing conventions that they learned in the West even when writing in Chinese. Although some of these scholars saw such practice as the influence of English and themselves as pioneers bringing such changes to the academic scene in China, some Chinese journal editors resisted accepting publications that followed such Western conventions because they were inconsistent with the needs and expectations of the local audience. This was the opposite of what a lot of NNES scholars experience when attempting to publish in international English-medium journals.

Similarly, Belcher’s study (2007) investigates the strategies NNES scholars use to achieve acceptance in mainstream Anglophone journals which often play a gate keeping role in the careers of NNES scholars. Belcher found that NNES scholars surveyed the publication practices of other non-mainstream (i.e., non-Anglophone) scholars when these scholars attempt to publish in mainstream journals in English. However, Belcher gathered data from divergent sources, including L1 speakers of Arabic, Chinese, French, and Spanish, as well as three NESs. She compiled and analyzed nine documents submitted by the participants to a renowned English language applied linguistics journal from 1998 to 2001. Her findings inform us that an author’s success in publication hinged on his or her willingness to revise manuscripts according to the reviewers’ comments, and not on his/her status as an NES or NNES, or on the various focuses and topics of papers.

3.3.3 Socialization recalled by former NNES graduate students in TESOL

In ”Reflections on multiliterature lives” (Belcher & Connor, 2001), a number of scholars in applied linguistics and TESOL have recalled their socialization and enculturation experiences in their graduate years and particularly the challenges they faced with L2 writing and publication
(Canagarajah, 2001; Kubota, 2001; Liu, 2001; Sasaki, 2001) which played an important role in shaping them as scholars in the field. These stories take the form of a narrative, which offers thick description in many cases and provides especially valuable insights into “the emotional peaks and valleys of language learning and teaching” (Belcher & Connor, 2001, p. 4). While all noted some degrees of frustration and trial and error in their first attempts at writing due to unfamiliar L2 writing conventions or simple lack of practice in writing in L2, their stories varied based on the degree of their L1 literacy influence which will be discussed further below.

Now one of the notable TESOL scholars, Canagarajah (2001) recalled his humble beginnings as a scholar and his first successes as a novice scholar. His first essays in graduate school were graded mostly based on text convention and construction (i.e., formatting, spelling errors, and organization), which he mostly unknowingly violated, rather than on the content of his paper. As a result, he received low scores in the beginning. Although he had to struggle to learn and master North American discourse expectations, upon graduation he had published articles in several prestigious journals. Canagarajah’s acquisition of the conventional academic writing came when he actually taught composition to undergraduate students as a teaching assistant (TA) in the United States. Once he acquired the “magic formula” (p. 30), he became successful at being accepted as a legitimate scholar and made some successful attempts at publication. However, he reminds us that conventions for academic text construction are not universal; in fact, the North American style of academic writing he acquired in the United States was viewed as “pompous” and “over confident” (p. 31) in his native Sri Lanka. As a result, he had to adapt to local expectations and conventions of academic writing in order to reach local audiences. This aligns with Shi’s (2002a) findings mentioned earlier. He concluded that such conflicts provided him some valuable insights into the challenges in academic communication in
various contexts as well as a better understanding and keener appreciation of the strengths and limitations of academic discursive traditions in each context.

Some scholars like Kubota (2001) and Sasaki (2001), both from Japan, credited their L1 literacy development as having considerable influence on their graduate studies and L2 writing. Kubota (2001) asserted that two aspects of her L1 literacy training resulted in her predisposition to and interest in critical pedagogy: the various kinds of reading she was exposed to as a child and the form of writing she was required to do as a student in Japan that asked her to critically observe human society. Later on, she developed her L2 academic writing skills by doing extensive reading and writing in English. In other words, without having received any formal training in writing in L2, Kubota found a model for her writing by reading research articles. Kubota noted that she was able to become a more skilled academic writer by paying attending to common conventions of academic writing such as politeness strategies (Belcher, 1995). Earlier in her career she had focused on clarity rather than tone and often her writing sounded too direct and straightforward. At the same time, she regretted that her L2 did not reveal her “authentic voice” as much as she would have liked it to, especially after it was edited by someone else; however, in order to access a wider audience, she affirmed that she believes in making her writing more readable and error free and appreciates feedback on her L2 writing.

Sasaki (2001), like Kubota (2001), also recalled benefits of her childhood L1 literacy, namely the strong influence of extensive reading of various topics and genres on her development as an English scholar. Sasaki’s first attempt at publishing in an international journal when she was a doctoral student was successful and she credited it to the many strategies she employed. First of all, she gained an understanding of the conventions and expectations of academic writing when she was an exchange student in the United States as an undergraduate.
Also, the many papers she wrote for different courses as a doctoral student in the United States helped her gain breadth and depth in the field. Finally, she tried to gain a competitive edge over American students by conducting research in an advantageous area: for instance, she invited L1 Japanese speakers to participate in her study because as an L1 Japanese speaker, she could transcribe and analyze the data she collected. She also reported that, like when she was in graduate school, she received help from proofreaders and made as many revisions as necessary based on the constructive criticism she received in order to publish. She echoed Kubota (2001), asserting that although academic work in her L2 was a struggle, it was worth the trouble because English proficiency afforded her access to the world of research and the ability to reach a wider audience. With regards to publication, after serving as an editor, Sasaki noted that even the most established scholars’ manuscripts, whether they were NESs or NNESs, often required extensive revision before being published. This point resonates with Belcher’s (2007) finding that willingness to make necessary revision often results in publication of one’s work.

Unlike the aforementioned writers, Kubota and Sasaki, Liu (2001) recalled quite a different L1 literacy experience at home in China in the midst of the Cultural Revolution when even possession of Western books was forbidden. Nevertheless, he credited memorizing and reciting literary texts, a traditional Chinese practice, in both his L1 as well as L2 (with the help of books his father, an English teacher, owned) for having lasting benefits in his subsequent literacy practices in L2. When he came to the United States as a doctoral student, he was not comfortable writing in English because he lacked practice. As a matter of fact, he was actually placed in an advanced ESL class in his first year of doctoral studies, which he found to be humiliating since he had to study alongside those “whom I could have taught” (p. 127). He observed that when he wrote in Chinese, he paid more focus on content whereas syntax and structure got more attention.
when writing in English. In order to narrow this gap, Liu improved his L2 writing by revising papers multiple times, taking tutorials, and getting peer reviews, things he had not had the opportunity to do in China. In his third year in the Ph.D. program, a book review he submitted was published after revision although the first submission was rejected by a leading journal. Liu applied for and worked as a TA which gave him a sense of membership of the target academic community. He argued that observing L2 writing conventions and persistence in revising built up his confidence and more publications resulted.

All in all, despite the divergent and unique prior experiences and schooling they had had before their graduate studies in the United States, all the scholars noted that they encountered some difficulties in their socialization into graduate school particularly pertaining to writing. Canagarajah (2001) was not apprenticed into academic writing conventions in English at first, which obscured the value of the content in his papers. Kubota (2001) reported regrets for the decrease or loss of her authentic voice in her L2 writing, while Sasaki (2001) acknowledged the benefits of proofreading for her L2 writing in order to reach a wider audience. Liu (2001) also discussed the difficult socialization process he experienced (i.e., having been assigned to a remedial ESL course in the first year of his doctoral studies). However, in spite of initial difficulties, challenges, setbacks, and disappointments, they all successfully acquired the conventions, the “magic formula” (Canagarajah, 2001, p. 30), and adopted strategies like consulting a proofreader for their papers and submitting their research for publication to grow as scholars.

3.4 Summary

In this chapter, studies that discussed the socialization experiences of NNES graduate students in TESOL were reviewed. First, I looked at studies that focused on the construction and
negotiation of various identities of NNES students in TESOL programs with particular attention to their future trajectory as L2 teachers after graduation. I also reviewed studies denoting various components of TESOL curricula ranging from phonology to pragmatics and the gaps reported by some NNESs between the curriculum and their actual needs. Finally, studies that dealt with issues and experiences of NNES students in TESOL programs and their socialization in academic writing were explored. Also included were some practices in publication and accounts of socialization experiences of former NNES graduate TESOL students who are now renowned scholars.

In the following methodology chapter, I will first discuss the qualitative case study method that guided this study. Then I will provide detailed description of the data including the focal participants, data sources, and analysis. Findings chapters that address the three research questions for this study will follow.
Chapter 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This methodology chapter is organized as follows: first of all, I discuss the qualitative case study approach, the methodology I employed to address my research questions. Then, I provide information about my research design, procedures, and data, beginning first with an introduction to the research context and then the participants of the study. I also detail the data sources followed by the procedures and challenges involved in data analysis. Finally, I address ethical considerations, the trustworthiness of the study, my role as interviewer, and the process of member checking.

4.1 Qualitative case study approach

This study examined the perspectives of NNES graduate students on the process of language socialization and initiation into academic literacies in a new academic environment; as such, the study necessitated a thorough examination of various local and broad contextual factors surrounding the sociocultural and linguistic experiences of NNES students.

For the study, I followed five NNES graduate students in their first academic year at a Canadian university. In order to ensure rich, triangulated, and socioculturally grounded data, I used a qualitative case study approach (Creswell, 1994; Duff, 2008a; Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Merriam, 1988, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003a, 2003b) for this study. The longitudinal potential of a qualitative case study (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) allowed me to engage in qualitative data collection methods, which in turn provided insights into the language socialization processes reported by the participants.
Among various approaches in qualitative studies, case studies (Gerring, 2004; Hammersley & Gomm, 2000; Stake, 1995) in particular have been recognized and widely conducted in linguistics (Duff, 2008a) as they provide thick description (Geertz, 1973) of L2 learners and help identify sociocultural factors responsible for their L2 development (Duff, 2008a). According to Merriam (1998), case studies are particularly effective for language socialization studies because they are (a) particularistic (i.e., they focus on a specific event, program, or phenomenon); (b) descriptive (i.e., they provide “thick description” results as the end product of the investigation); and (c) heuristic (i.e., they provide fresh understandings of a phenomenon via discovery, extension, or confirmation of what is already known). Owing to these features, a case-study approach can provide in-depth explanations of "complex, situated, and problematic relations” (Stake, 2003, p. 142) by focusing on the “how” and “why” (Yin, 2003b) when the context of a situation (i.e., in case of this study, language socialization processes in an English-speaking academic environment) has a strong influence on the phenomenon under study. In addition, case studies center on “individual cases” (Stake, 2003, p. 134) by focusing on the object of study rather than the research process itself (Yin, 2003b).

Among various types of case studies, ethnographic case studies in particular (Miller, Hengst & Wang, 2003; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Roberts, Byram, Barro, Jordan, & Street, 2001; Wolcott, 1999) place a heavy focus on cultural influences and seek to provide description and explanation of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1998). I chose to conduct a longitudinal multiple case study because the research questions explore a case over time, enabling me to explain the participants’ prior learning and professional experiences in relation to their current language socialization. In other words, I attempted to go beyond simply narrating the participants’ language socialization experiences to discuss the conflicts, challenges, and the
number of unanticipated events in their language socialization. Although case studies are often criticized for lacking generalizability and being less rigorous than some other kinds of research (particularly quantitative studies), the focus of this study is not to identify generalizable findings (Becker, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Mitchell, 1983). Rather, this study seeks to capture a glimpse of the sociocultural contexts in which these participants were situated (Dirkx & Barnes, 2004; Flyvbjerg, 1994) and to suggest educational intervention and social support strategies that would empower current and future NNES graduate students.

Interviews served as the primary source of data for this study. Ubiquitous in applied linguistics studies, interviews have been a central source for many ethnographies and case studies (Talmy & Richards, 2011). When conducting interviews, scholars may assume they know what interviews are and what they produce (Briggs, 1986). In recent years, however, we have begun to take a more critical and reflective approach toward the context of the interview itself since interviews assume a particular importance in understanding the research context (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997).

Talmy (2011) argued interviews should be viewed not simply as research instrument (i.e., simply delivering the words exchanged between interviewers and interviewees), but more as social practice, which needs to be theorized to see what sociocultural interplays, such as interviewer agency and positioning, were present during interviews. In other words, interviews need to be contextualized, “adequately, consistently, and coherently theorized” and understood within the context “in which they were occasioned” (Talmy & Richards, 2011, p. 3). In this regard, ethnographic interviews afford a number of rich experiences to both interviewer and interviewee alike. There is the potential for an ongoing, respectful relationship characterized by a
“genuine exchange of views” (Heyl, 2001, p. 369), as interviews often tend to be long enough to allow a rapport to develop.

4.2 Context of the study

The study took place at New World University (NWU)\textsuperscript{9}, a Canadian university with a large NNES student population. The particular language education program from which the participants of this study were drawn enrolled on average 20-25 new students each year. According to the departmental website, applicants from non-English speaking countries are required to meet English language proficiency standards (e.g., passing scores on TOEFL/TWE, IELTS, or MELAB exams) as well as other general admission requirements, such as good undergraduate grades and some teaching experience for the Master's programs (for both M.Ed. and M.A.). Applicants to the doctoral program must also demonstrate strong potential in research and publication.

My personal experience as a mature graduate student who returned to school after several years of teaching and who has experienced and is currently experiencing various language socialization instances motivated me to conduct this research. Although I might not be representative of the mature NNES graduate student population of this study because some of my post-secondary schooling took place in North America, being an NNES with teaching experience has helped me identify with this population and its unique characteristics. Through frequent and meaningful contact during the research process, I established close relationships with my focal participants despite our diverse experiences and my limited knowledge of their particular individual situations. Such a rapport created a heightened sense of trust and intimacy that encouraged the participants to discuss in greater detail their concerns, thoughts, and even

\textsuperscript{9} All institutions, programs, and participant names are pseudonyms.
critiques of their language socialization processes as well as the interpersonal interactions that contributed to their acculturation to a new environment.

4.3 Participants

4.3.1 Participant recruitment

A purposeful sampling technique (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003) was used in recruiting the participants for this study, considering comparability of the participants’ linguistic background, educational level, and professional experiences. First of all, I went to the department orientation held on September 5, 2008, attended by a large number of incoming students, and approached first-year, full-time NNES graduate students to introduce my study. Following an initial meeting, I contacted those who showed interest in participating via email. Among them, five individuals (initially seven, but two quickly withdrew before the first meeting citing personal reasons) who shared similar linguistic and professional experiences were invited as focal participants for intensive individual case studies. A few other graduate students, including some native English speakers (NESs), also participated by informally sharing their first-year experience in graduate studies. Although it initially seemed that the experiences shared by NES students could serve as a complement or support to the experiences of the focal participants, I have omitted them from the study as their cases were not the focus of this study. However, the focal participants discussed incidences in which they observed their NES colleagues adapting to their academic environment. By doing so, they hinted that some NES students experienced similar challenges as they were socialized into academic literacy and a new academic context. This point will be elaborated in Chapter 6, 6.1.1.1 (NESs also experience challenges).
4.3.2 General profile of participants

Although some scholars like Park (2006) called for more “research agendas focusing on the lives and experiences of East Asian women in the … TESOL program,” (p. 47), it was not my intention to limit my study participants to exclusively East Asians and women only. It turned out that in the particular year the data collection took place, the majority of incoming NNES graduate students to the program at NWU were female students from Korea and China. A total of five female NNES graduate students responded positively to the invitation to participate in the study (see Table 4.1 for the general profile of participants), their ages ranging from mid-twenties to early thirties. All but one had taught either EFL or ESL for at least two years. Their L1 was either Chinese or Korean and they all learned English as an L2 in their home country.

During their first year in the program, the five participants took two to five courses a term including a research methodology course (to be discussed in Chapter 5, 5.2.2 Socialization in the courses). In the majority of these courses, they were asked to engage in academic literacies and the local practices of graduate school: i.e., to participate orally in class discussions, to deliver individual or group presentations, and/or to submit various writing assignments that typically included a final research paper, short reflection papers, and online bulletin board postings, among others.
Table 4.1 General profile of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>First language</th>
<th>Undergraduate Major</th>
<th>Years/Experience studying English</th>
<th>Teaching experience</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“DRY”</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Foreign (Not English) Language and Literature</td>
<td>14 (Since 7th grade)  *immigrant *</td>
<td>10 years in private institutions in Korea</td>
<td>M.Ed. in Language Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eujin</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>English Education</td>
<td>14 (Since 7th grade)</td>
<td>5 years in public secondary school in Korea</td>
<td>M.Ed. in Language Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“ME”</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>English Language &amp; Literature/ TESOL</td>
<td>14 (Since 7th grade)</td>
<td>2 years in US (adult immigrants)</td>
<td>Ph.D. in Language Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelley</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>English (with a concentration in Business)</td>
<td>Since 1988 (approximately 12 years) 2 months in Canada</td>
<td>10 years in China (secondary students)</td>
<td>M.Ed. in Language Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“STRUGGLE”</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Elementary Education (with Specialization in English Education)</td>
<td>1 year in US in elementary school; 4 months in Canada; 6 years in high school in Korea</td>
<td>Less than 2 years of ESL grades 1 &amp; 2 in the US</td>
<td>Ph.D. in Literacy Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3 Protection of participants

I took the appropriate steps to ensure protection of the participants in the study. A university required ethical review form was approved before the data collection. On the consent

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10 All names are pseudonyms chosen by the participants themselves. More on their choices is detailed in Chapter 5.

11 At the time data collection started.

12 Later changed to M.A.
form, it was explicitly stated that participation was strictly voluntary, participants’ names and identity would not be disclosed, and they had the right to withdraw from the study whenever they wished. In this dissertation, pseudonyms selected by the participants are used in order to protect participants from any chance of disclosure. Also, interviews with their instructors, who were also part of the study, were conducted after the final grades of the participants were submitted.

As a token of thanks for their participation and time commitment, I provided university bookstore gift certificates in the amount of $50 to the participants. Throughout the duration of the study, I also provided occasional help in the form of feedback and comments on drafts of written assignments upon request. After a few regular meetings, participants explained that they felt they were benefitting from our talks in a number of ways. First of all, interviews served as a forum to reflect on their language socialization experiences. Moreover, they were being reminded of the importance of academic writing in graduate school and were able to discuss their challenges with others who were going through similar language socialization processes (particularly in joint interviews).

4.4 Data sources

4.4.1 Triangulation of data sources

In order to enhance the trustworthiness of case study data, I took language socialization as topic approach (Bronson & Watson-Gegeo, 2008) using multiple data sources and methods (see Table 4.2 Overview of data sources), including interviews (individual and with 2-3 participants at one time), participant journals, writing samples, field research, and document analysis. In particular, I took language socialization as topic approach (Bronson & Watson-Gegeo, 2008). The use of various sources allowed me to create richer, more in-depth description
and analysis of the phenomena under study (Geertz, 1973) as well as develop a better sense of their language socialization processes. Various data sources were analyzed within and across cases to confirm or sometimes to contradict initial interpretations. In particular, substantial focus was paid to participant interviews that detailed their socialization processes first in graduate studies and then academic literacies. Among the experiences discussed in interviews, writing in particular was identified as a major socialization challenge for all participants.

Table 4.2 Overview of data sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data sources</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Focus of analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>A one-hour, pre-study interview (&amp; questionnaire)</td>
<td>Focal participants</td>
<td>- Prior experiences and future goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A one-hour, post-study interview (&amp; questionnaire)</td>
<td>(5 persons)</td>
<td>- Self-assessment of changes as a result of the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-17 one-hour, semi-monthly interviews per participant</td>
<td>Focal participants</td>
<td>- Language socialization experiences and processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A one-time, one-hour interview (recorded); two informal interviews</td>
<td>Instructors (3)</td>
<td>- Views on the participants’ work and progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eight joint interviews</td>
<td>Focal participants (2-4)</td>
<td>- Language socialization experiences and processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
<td>Not time-specific; voluntary; noting language socialization particularly relevant to academic literacies; sometimes done via email</td>
<td>Focal participants (4)</td>
<td>- Links to the participants’ interviews and reflections; language socialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing samples</td>
<td>Course syllabi</td>
<td>Focal participants (5)</td>
<td>- Language socialization and writing demands in and out of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class readings; source readings for assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td>- The participants’ response and subsequent adaptation of various types of feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments (drafts and final papers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field research</td>
<td>Class observations</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>- The participants’ language socialization instances and experiences as observed in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection journal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td>Various information on TESOL program on the department website</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>- Gaps between the participants’ perceived demands and the actual requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Studies website</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4.2 Interviews

A chief source of data for this study came from semi-structured individual and group interviews (Kvale, 1996; Merriam, 1998) with the participants held from September 2008 to May 2009 (July 2009 for post-study interview) (see Appendix G for Guiding interview questions), which took place mainly around or on the participating university campus. These interviews were designed to provide regular opportunities to elicit reflections and to get participant perspectives on their socialization experiences with a particular focus on their academic literacies. As interviews were a major source of data to chronicle the participants’ socialization processes, considerable efforts were made to ensure appropriate occasions and adequate time to discuss such processes in interviews. Depending on each participant’s availability, interviews were held from 10 to 17 times per participant, usually every other week throughout the academic year. Interviews lasted about 90 minutes each although some interviews took as long as three hours. There were eight joint interviews with two or three participants. All but one participant (“ME”) participated in at least one joint interview. Joint interviews were often held rather spontaneously, usually after a talk, workshop or symposium the participants attended together to discuss its implications for our study, for example.

The interviews were conducted solely in English with two of the participants; however, with the three other participants with whom I share L1 (Korean), interviews were conducted mostly in Korean with occasional code switching between Korean and English. Interviews were digitally audio-recorded and transcribed. The interviews conducted in Korean were translated by the researcher into English during transcription (see Appendix E for Transcription conventions).

As I was particularly drawn to each participant’s own unique ways of dealing with the socialization process and coping with challenges in a new academic environment, I took various
other opportunities to communicate with them, mainly through email and phone calls, but occasionally in person. Based on the interview data, correspondence with the participants, and my field notes, subsequent follow-up questions were devised in areas that needed further clarification or elaboration at the next meeting. In this way, I was able to follow up on their socialization processes over time and observe how they dealt with challenges at different points in the term. However, most of the questions I asked pertained to mutual and emergent interests that arose during the interview. 

Before embarking on regular interviews, all participants met in the beginning of the first term in 2008 for a pre-study questionnaire and interview. This interview was conducted to identify the participants’ biographical information, past learning and teaching experiences with English, goals for their studies in their program, and their future trajectory for writing in English. They were also asked to self-assess their English skills with a particular focus on writing (see Appendix F for a list of questions). This self-evaluation (e.g., Oscarson, 1989) was used to investigate how the participants’ view on their ability and confidence in English might change through socialization in a new environment. Self-evaluation might not be an objective or accurate way of measuring a learner’s actual improvement\(^{13}\) or a method normally used in language socialization studies; nevertheless, it may be one of the most effective ways to investigate a learner’s perceptions of his/her progress as writer because it turns the learner’s attention to his/her (un)improvement, particularly when the learner is asked “why and how” he/she self-assessed his/her abilities as such. After the completion of regular interviews, participants filled out a post-study questionnaire followed by a short interview. The questionnaire repeated the questions from the pre-study interview (except one added question) to

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\(^{13}\) What constitutes improvement is not elaborated here, but rather used in a broadly defined sense.
see whether the participants’ language socialization experiences over an academic year yielded any notable changes in their self-assessment of their English writing.

4.4.3 Participant perspectives

Participants were encouraged to take notes or keep journals in English (or in their L1 if they found it more inviting or suitable) noting their language socialization experiences and adjustment to graduate studies. They were not explicitly told how often, how much or what to write in their journals; instead, they were asked to note their needs, concerns, experiences, and progress as they pertain to their developing L2 academic literacies and writing, in particular, and to their overall socialization. They were told to note not only psycholinguistic and cognitive, but also sociocultural concerns, since the latter sometimes plays a bigger role an NNES’s overall success in academic life in an ESL context (Spack, 1997).

Two of the participants kept a regular journal, and two others regularly corresponded with me via email discussing their socialization experiences. Among them, one participant, STRUGGLE, sent me her personal journal which was written and posted on her personal blog during her first year in the program. It contained quite intimate and delicate details of her inner struggle. All but one participant, Shelley, who had to return to her home country after a year at NWU, stayed in Canada continuing their studies at NWU. Even after the official data collection period ended, I stayed in contact with most of the participants (see 4.6.1.2 Participant rapport with researcher).

4.4.4 Field research (class observations, field notes, and reflection journal)

I contacted some of the participants’ instructors and was allowed to observe two different classes, one in each term. All my participants were in the two classes I observed, either as
registered students or auditors. Unfortunately, the particular classes I observed could be considered “out of ordinary”, as noted by one of the instructors being observed; one class was devoted entirely to students’ presentations and the other one was mainly composed of small group discussions. However, observing the participants’ language socialization processes in situ allowed me to gain some valuable insights into the specifics in classroom context, such as the physical classroom setting, class dynamics, and student composition in each class. Such understanding eventually aided me in making better connections to some of the participants’ accounts of their classroom language socialization experiences during interviews. In short, observations as well as the field notes taken during and after observations helped me comprehend their in-class language socialization experiences more effectively. Classroom observation also helped me to witness “how behavior and interaction are socially organized and the social rules, interactional expectations, and cultural values underlying behavior” are carried out (Watson-Gegeo, 1988, p. 577).

Also, I took extensive field notes during and after observations, and kept reflection journals in both electronic and handwritten form throughout the research. These journals recorded my thoughts, impressions, and any preliminary analysis on any of the findings.

4.4.5 Course documents and writing drafts

Relevant documents linked to participants’ courses and writing samples were also collected in order to investigate requirements and expectations. These include course syllabi, instructions for assignments, various stages of drafts for course assignments, readings cited in their papers, and in some cases, accounts of correspondence with instructors. These documents not only served as a valuable tool in connecting participants’ accounts during interviews, but also as evidence of their language socialization processes. For instance, when three of the participants
(Eujin, Shelley, and "DRY") expressed concerns about not understanding the expectations for one of their writing assignments, I could check whether specific guidelines were presented in the assignment description and whether they were presented in a manner that my participants could understand and interpret correctly.

Also, as this study focuses on NNES graduate students’ socialization in academic literacies, particularly writing, which is a vital tool for scholarly communication and eventual success in academia, the drafts of the participants’ assignments served as a window for me to observe where and how they were challenged in acquiring the new skills, that is, academic writing in English.

4.4.6 NES peer interviews

Three first-year NESs in the program who volunteered to participate in the study were interviewed once for about an hour each. However, as they were not the focal participants in the study, most of their accounts were not used as data; rather, the participants’ observation of their NES colleagues who also joined the program as newcomers was noted in Chapter 6 (6.1.1.1 NES not without challenges) to highlight the fact that these new NES graduate students’ experiences were not too distant from those of NNESs.

Among the first-year NESs, one particular individual who served as a peer writing tutor was interviewed in order to understand the rationale and procedures of the writing support effort initiated by the program in Winter I term, 2008. Discussions are elaborated in Chapter 7 (7.2.2. Peer writing tutor program).
4.4.7 Instructor interviews/comments on students’ papers

Instructors were contacted through email or in person for a one-time interview after the participants took their courses and received the final grades. Two informal and one recorded interviews were conducted with three instructors who agreed to comment on the participants’ performances in class (mostly oral participation and presentation) and on their writing. In addition, their views on the participants’ progress on various aspects of their language socialization were also discussed. In the case of one instructor, I specifically asked for comments on some of the concepts dealt with in the discipline, namely critical thinking (discussed in 5.2.5 Defining critical thinking and writing).

I also took notes on their feedback or comments on the participants’ written assignments, mainly to supplement findings from the participant interviews.

4.4.8 Document analysis of the graduate program

Finally, I conducted a document analysis of the information posted on the websites of the graduate program and the graduate studies office of NWU. Materials from these websites were mainly used to complement, support, or clarify my participants’ accounts during interviews. For instance, as some of the participants extensively expressed their desire to write a thesis, one of the first socialization instances in graduate studies identified in Chapter 5, I examined the program and graduate studies websites to assess whether students in the non-thesis program could transfer to the thesis program, and if so, what would be required of them. Also, in order to closely examine the general requirements and expectation for master’s and doctoral program students, I used the program website as a reference. More specific course requirements and expectation from instructors were collected through other more direct means such as instructor interviews (see above 4.4.7).
4.5 Data analysis

Data analysis for the study adhered to principles of qualitative inquiry. Iterative data analysis was initiated at the beginning of data collection and continued throughout the entire data collection process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Duff, 2008a; Merriam, 1998). I followed conventional steps, including being immersed in the data, that is, taking data as a starting point of analysis (Dörnyei, 2007); searching, identifying, sorting, and coding emergent patterns and salient themes; and deciding on the elements to focus on and the particular themes to report on.

I also closely analyzed the discourse and interaction in a subset of interview data, particularly those pertaining to negotiation of identities in Chapter 6. I specifically focused on identifying beliefs and ideologies embedded in the language used by the participants in interviews (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Silverman, 2006). Such close analysis of the discourse allowed me to highlight the constant shifting of the participants’ positioning and identities. For instance, in one class, one of the participants identified herself as a NNES, distinguishing herself from the NES students. Then, she referred to herself as a member of the department’s graduate student cohort (including both NES and NNES students), contrasting this group against other graduate students at the university.

During the initial stages of data collection, my analysis focused on identifying areas that needed to be explored further in subsequent interviews. After each interview, I carefully listened to the recording multiple times, summarized contents, and coded salient themes (e.g., importance of research vs. practical application; class participation; peer review issues; native vs. nonnative English speaker status; writing development). These identified themes were also checked by another (bilingual) researcher and later the study participants who examined the relevant transcripts to verify my coding and interpretations. Not all interviews were fully
transcribed at first. Instead, I took note of the need for any further revision or expansion while making my initial summary of each interview and revisited my summary toward the end of the data collection period.

Also, if any of the identified themes or points of interest in interviews needed clarification or elaboration, they were discussed at the beginning of subsequent interviews. Often, the whole meeting was spent discussing a point raised in an earlier interview (e.g., critical assessment of their writing).

After collating and reviewing all relevant data for each focal participant, I first analyzed each case by looking at the characteristics and contextual factors that distinguished each participant’s case from the others. Then, as noted earlier, I located salient and interesting themes related to the three research questions guiding the study. I discussed those salient themes in a cross-case analysis of data from the five participants. The cross-case analysis mainly discusses the participants’ socialization experiences in their program as new NNES graduate students (Research question #1), participants’ negotiation and shifting of their positioning and identities (Research question #2), and participants’ assessment of their writing skills and themselves as writer as they socialized into becoming an academic writer in the discipline of their study (Research question #3). The analysis was guided by theoretical understandings of language socialization practices and the assumption that L2 writing development is constantly shaped by the participants’ sociocultural and academic contexts.

As substantial data were gathered toward the end of the data collection period, the analyses became more detailed and in depth. However, there was some trial and error in my analyses. Some of the initial approaches to analysis were later discarded. For instance, I found that analyzing interview data using a conversation analysis approach (Wooffitt, 2005) was
unnecessary because the focus was more on themes rather than turn-taking and interaction. However, as close analysis of their talk seemed necessary, I analyzed the discourse of several interviews (Fairclough, 2003; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Gee, 2011; Widdowson, 1998) to understand their ways of conveying their views.

Finally, I was greatly aided by a group of colleagues who provided constructive feedback on my transcription, interpretation, and analysis of data and some inter-coder checking. I also presented and tested my analysis of various aspects of this research at different research conferences, which provided invaluable insight into re-evaluating my analysis (M. Kim, 2008; 2011).

4.6 Ethical considerations and trustworthiness

In an attempt to enhance the validity and credibility of the findings (Chapelle & Duff, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 2000), I employed various measures in collecting and analyzing the data. First of all, the wide range of data collected, such as longitudinal interviews, participant journals, writing samples, field notes, and document analysis allowed for a triangulation of the information. Also, I attempted to use various perspectives and data analysis techniques to develop and verify an understanding of the relevant themes and possible interpretations of the data. For instance, when devising self-evaluation questions that inquired about the participants’ perception of their competence in various language socialization instances in their first year at NWU, I considerably modified the TOEIC Can-do questions to simulate scenarios they were likely to face in their academic communities of practice (CoPs; Lave and Wenger, 1991) as well as in an everyday context in a new setting (see Appendix F). These questions were used to assess the validity of the participants’ claim, i.e., the degree to which a self-evaluation measures what it
claims to be measuring (Brown, 1988). Also, in order to fully grasp the socially-constructed nature of discursive activities evident during interviews, a discourse analysis technique was employed for the analysis of some of the interview data (see Chapter 6).

4.6.1 Role of the interviewer

4.6.1.1 Interviews as new socialization practices

I planned for participant interviews to be semi-structured, sometimes with a few clarifying questions drawn from previous interviews. In other words, instead of having a set of questions for the interviewees, I tried to allow them to supply their own questions, inquiries, and concerns for us to discuss. In other words, the participants and I jointly constructed each interview. Moreover, I asked that the interviewees review my interpretations and analysis of the interviews to ensure that we had arrived at a mutual understanding. For most of the participants, the interviews themselves were new socialization processes wherein themes were scaffolded and the identities of the interviewer and the interviewee were performed co-constructively (Talmy, 2011). In fact, a large part of this study was autobiographical in that I was often emotionally invested in listening to the participants’ accounts during interviews, especially as I was also experiencing my own forms of academic and literacy socialization at the same time in a similar programmatic context. Therefore, particularly after a long discussion of the challenges the interviewees identified as NNESs in graduate studies, I often shared my own socialization experiences. While not trying to overly direct or influence their accounts or subsequent discussion of their language socialization in interviews, I tried to assure them, as someone who has “been there, done that,” that “things will get better as time goes by”. This was usually done after the official (recorded) interview sessions were finished. As a result, interviews often
morphed into “therapy sessions” (“ME” Interview, Jan 21, 2009) where the participants could share their frustration and concerns in their graduate studies. While such closeness and rapport between the interviewer and interviewees (see below, 4.6.1.2) could pose potential ethical issues by creating an imbalance in the relationship, I made every conscientious effort to be aware of my positioning as interviewer.

4.6.1.2 Participant rapport with researcher

Not only did my shared experience with the participants allow me to identify implicit meaning or nuances in the participants’ interviews (Denzin, 2001), but it also helped to establish trust. As noted earlier, my relationship with the participants went beyond that of interviewer and interviewee. As interviews continued, rapport and understanding increased, and the trust and friendship between us grew. This development in the relationships I had with participants became more apparent in the way the Korean participants addressed me.

Selecting the appropriate form of address is an important part of socialization for Koreans, as it not only indicates the degree of intimacy in a relationship, but also the perception of each other’s role in their situated contexts (see Sohn, 2006). For instance, to show respect for me being their senior (in age and experience), some of the participants called me “선생님 (seon-saeng-nim),” which literally means “teacher” but is often used to indicate respect. At the same time, this manner of address immediately creates distance and asymmetry in the relations between the addresser and addressee. What is notable is that some participants used this honorific consistently, not only during interviews but also in our email correspondence, including exchanges in English.
Meanwhile, "DRY", who is slightly older than the other interviewees, first asked me if she could address me as “언니 (eon-ni),” which literally means “older sister” but is often used to refer to those who are not only older but also personally close. Soon, however, she began alternatively addressing me as “선배님 (seon-bae-nim, referring to someone who is higher in terms of seniority in groups),” 언니 (eon-ni), and occasionally 선생님 (seon-saeng-nim). When asked about her tendency to shift between forms of address, she did not seem to have been conscious of it. However, a close analysis shows that she tended to address me as 선배님 (seon-bae-nim) when she was asking me for advice in an academic context, which was most often the case. However, when talking about something more personal or general, she tended to unconsciously address me as 언니 (eon-ni), especially at the beginning of the data collection period.

In sum, the changes in the way participants addressed the interviewer/researcher indicate how interviewees were socialized into being interviewed by a researcher in different occasions; at the same time, they also demonstrate the rapport formed between the interviewer and the interviewees.

4.6.2 Member check

In order to “ensure the authenticity or credibility of interpretations, or shed new light on the analyses” (Duff, 2008a, p. 171) of data collected, member checks on preliminary findings were conducted. For DRY, Eujin and STRUGGLE, the member check included the English translations of interviews conducted in Korean. In fact, my initial interpretation of data was
shared with my focal participants throughout the study, as I needed to clarify or ask for elaboration on some of the themes that emerged in interviews. Nonetheless, official member checks were carried out through email in the case of those participants who were no longer on campus and in person with those who were able to meet up and discuss their views on my analysis. I first emailed participants some of my preliminary analysis and asked them to comment whether they agreed with it or not. Eujin, in particular, showed some concern about the translation of her accounts in two of the interview analyses, and I agreed to correct them. STRUGGLE, a doctoral student who understood the research process assured me that she trusted my interpretation of her statements and writing samples completely and declined to comment on my analysis.

4.7 Summary

In this methodology chapter, I have presented the methods of inquiry and the research context. I discussed the qualitative case study approach as the method of inquiry for this study, emphasizing suitability of this approach to answer the three research questions: NNESs’ self-identified socialization instances in their first year of graduate studies, how they negotiated their identities in academic communities of practice, and how they perceive their progress as well as setback in becoming academic writers.

I have also provided detailed description of the data-gathering processes from recruitment of the participants to the types of data sources used for the study (see Figure 4.1 Overview of research procedure). I then presented the data analysis techniques followed by a discussion of the ethical considerations of the study, including a consideration of the role of the interviewer/researcher and participant rapport with the researcher. In sum, I employed five case
studies and various sources of data to gain a broad as well as an in-depth understanding of the participants’ language socialization processes in their graduate studies.

In the following three chapters, findings that address the three research questions will be discussed. Chapter 5 will first introduce the focal participants and then their socialization into graduate studies including research and critical thinking. The participants’ negotiation and construction of identities as socialization practices are the focus in Chapter 6. In Chapter 7, the participant’s growing awareness of themselves as L2 writers will be highlighted.
Figure 4.1 Overview of research procedure

Selection of primary participants

Invitation to research

Focal participants

Invitation to research

Pre-study interviews
Including self-assessment on prior experiences

Semi-monthly interviews
(for 8 months)

Focal participants

Journal writing

Writing samples

Classroom observation,
field notes

Document analysis

Initial analysis

Semi-monthly interviews
(for 8 months)

Interviews of instructors

Semi-monthly interviews
(for 8 months)

Post-study interview
Including self-assessment on socialization processes

Analysis

Participant member check

Writing samples

Dissemination of findings
(journals, conferences)

Writing up

Analysis

Participant member check

Dissemination of findings
(journals, conferences)
Chapter 5

STUDENTS AGAIN:

NNES TESOL STUDENTS’ SOCIALIZATION INTO GRADUATE STUDIES

In this chapter, I first present the profiles of the focal participants followed by their choice of pseudonyms which succinctly reveal how the participants positioned themselves in their situated community of practice, i.e., the first year in the TESOL graduate program in a Canadian university. I then discuss synthesis of the findings with regard to their first encounter of socialization experiences in graduate studies to address the first research question: What are some of the critical instances in socialization processes identified by NNES students in their first year of graduate studies, and how do such experiences impact their positioning of themselves in their program of study? In particular, I highlight the local contextual factors as well as the divergent expectations NNES graduate students brought with them which often differed from the requirements expected from them as graduate students, be they NESs or NNESs. I illustrate how the divergent expectations confused and complicated what I would call the mutual socialization processes of the participants and professors at NWU. I then conclude the chapter with a summary and a lead to the next chapter.

5.1 Participant profiles and pseudonyms

In what follows, a brief profile of each participant is provided followed by the reasons for their choice of pseudonyms as reported in a pre-study questionnaire and also in the debriefing session after data collection. As described in Chapter 4, the participants of this study were all graduate students in the same department who brought diverse and unique resources as well as interests and goals to the program. The information presented here is intended to foreshadow the
participants’ subsequent socialization experiences led by the current demands of graduate studies which were sometimes viewed in divergence with their past experiences and future trajectories. There were a total of five participants, two doctoral and three master’s students. Biographical data for each participant is provided in Table 4.1 in Chapter 4 for a quick reference.

5.1.1 Participant profiles

5.1.1.1 “DRY”: “I was not fully immersed in my graduate studies.”

“DRY” was unique from other participants in many ways. First of all, she was the only Korean immigrant who was making her home in the city where NWU is located. Unlike the other participants, “DRY” was married and working outside the university for a local broadcasting company. Of the five participants, she was also the only one whose undergraduate major field of study was not directly related to English language or education. Regrettably, the combination of these factors often prevented her from being fully immersed (in her words, “not saturated”, hence “dry”) in her graduate studies despite the empowerment and legitimacy she claimed to have gained through her studies at NWU.

She decided to pursue her graduate studies at NWU after nearly ten years of teaching English to adults and teens mostly in an EFL (but also in an ESL) context, which she asserted she truly enjoyed. One her major motivations for studying TESOL at NWU was to gain a competitive edge in the job market by equipping herself with a solid foundation in English education as well as a degree from an institution in North America.

“DRY” had an outgoing personality and claimed that she was quite comfortable with spoken English including small talk, which made her approachable to her classmates, both NESs
and NNESs alike. In class discussions, she actively contributed most of the time and “refused to remain as a stereotypical reticent NNES” (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original; See Cheng, 2000)\(^{14}\) because she wished to be viewed as one of the most active and fully devoted students in the program. Yet, she found herself feeling self-conscious of her academic performance, an anxiety that was deepened by her desire to write a thesis at the end of the program. I will elaborate on "DRY’s" thesis anxiety later.

One of the most interesting changes “DRY” made upon starting her program at NWU was to begin extensively using her Korean name instead of the English name she normally used outside of NWU. When asked for the reason, she responded that reading about and discussing the linguistic and cultural identities (of NNESs) and empowerment of English users (as opposed to English speakers) in the courses she took at NWU legitimized her identity and empowered her to use her Korean name.

Despite the fact that she acknowledged numerous benefits of her study at NWU including the above example, she was often frustrated by the discrepancy between her desire to be an exceptional graduate student and the reality of not being able to be fully dedicated to her studies due to her other personal and work commitments. Nevertheless, although her graduate studies might not have been as “successful” as she first anticipated, she was later assured that the insights and knowledge she gained from her graduate study, and more concretely, an M.Ed. degree from NWU not only helped her land a job after graduation teaching at a government-funded organization for adult newcomers to Canada, but also considerably helped her see herself as a more confident professional in her field.

\(^{14}\) “I” stands for interview, # for the number in the sequence of interviews, and “K-original” denotes that the original quote was in Korean, but translated into English by the researcher of this study. Non-English (translated) quotes are italicized throughout this dissertation.
5.1.1.2 Eujin: “English is my ‘eopbo (fate)’.”

Eujin was quite an active participant in this study not only in terms of sharing her socialization experiences in the past and present, but also providing insights into challenges many competent NNESs like herself face. It was also inspiring to see that despite her constant remarks on the “inadequacy” of her English and being new to the area of research, she successfully completed and defended her master’s thesis at the end of her program and went on to a doctoral program in applied linguistics at a university in Korea.

Eujin majored in English Education at a university in Korea. After passing a competitive teacher qualification exam, she taught English for five years at an all-boys junior high school prior to coming to NWU. She commented that she decided to pursue a master’s program at NWU in order to “learn to use English better” and to make herself more confident with English. Although she noted no direct advantage of her obtaining a master’s degree in the near future, a prevalent yet contested belief that native Korean-speaking English language instructors might not be effective in their teaching, particularly in subject matter pertaining to “culture” (Kim & Margolis, 2000), partly motivated her to pursue further study in an English speaking graduate school.

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15 More closely translated into “karma”. Eujin used this word to mean that she believes (learning and teaching) English is something that she is destined to carry out in her current life due to some deeds or actions she committed in her previous life.

16 In order to teach in public high schools in Korea, teacher hopefuls not only need to have a teacher certificate, but also must pass a teacher qualification exam, the name of which literally translates into “a competitive exam for appointment of public high school teacher candidates”. The examination involves three rounds of testing with an average competition rate of 20:1. It is often nicknamed “imyong-gosi (teacher appointment ‘bar’ exam),” a moniker that reflects the difficulty of passing this exam. In fact, the exam is known to be as difficult, if not more difficult than, the bar exam, also administered by Korean government. (Source: Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE), 2014).

17 It is also reported that despite requests from the South Korean Ministry of Education that teachers maximize foreign language use in the classroom, most teachers use a rather low amount of English (Liu, Ahn, Baek & Han, 2004).
Before coming to NWU, Eujin had previously travelled in Europe as well as spent a total of 12 months in English speaking countries to improve her English skills. Her English training included eight months in Vancouver for an intensive language study, three months in Toronto taking TESOL courses while in university, and one month in Hawaii as part of teacher training. Despite the considerable amount of time and energy she had invested in learning English and her relatively good command of English (as commented by other participants of the study), she noted that she was often discouraged by the distinguishably non-native features of her English. In fact, she referred to English as her “업보 (eopbo- closely translated into ‘karma’, a life-long burden, or fate),” an unavoidable burden and predestined task that she must carry out for the rest of her life. Had she not been an English teacher, she observed, she might have been perfectly content with her English, even to the point of enjoying it. However, being a public high school English teacher in Korea put a pressure on her to be “perfect” in all aspects of English.

Eujin was rather reserved and quiet in class mainly due to her hesitance in expressing herself in English. She called her English “distressing” and was often discouraged by it. However, it seemed she set a high standard for herself, as she was obviously a model student: dedicated, hard-working, and willing to learn. She even ventured out of the department and sat as an auditor in classes18 (see Table 5.1 for the list of courses the participants took in their first year) in another department in attempt to broaden her spectrum of academic English-language and cultural experiences.

Toward the end of her second year, she successfully identified a research topic which matches her own experience and interest, and was allowed to write a thesis. While working on her thesis, Eujin apprenticed in research and thesis writing, a process she found both empowering.

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18 She audited still more courses in Asian Studies in her second year at NWU.
and challenging at times. By actually doing the research, she could truly appreciate how research is conducted instead of analyzing it as a finished product. This process also prompted her to continue in doctoral study upon her return to Korea.

Eujin commented that one of the most remarkable learning experiences in the first term of her graduate studies was the discussion of the marginalization of NNESs, a topic she first encountered in one of the courses (see Chapter 6 for more discussion on the topic). Although she was conscious of gaps between ideals and the actual practices toward NNES teachers like herself in both ESL and EFL contexts (Kim & Margolis, 2000), the very discussion of this issue helped her not only be more aware of her positioning as an NNES teacher, but also be more empowered (but initially felt disempowered as discussed in 6.1.4 Feeling marginalized by the discourse of marginalization) to “enlighten” other NNES teachers and students around her.

5.1.1.3 “ME”: “Take me as I am.”

“ME” was one of the two doctoral student participants of this study. She majored in English language and literature with a specialization in TESOL during her undergraduate years in her home country and received her M.A. in TESL from a prestigious university in the United States. She was not new to Canada as she had previously stayed in Canada for a summer language program while in high school. However, she found her new graduate student life in Canada quite challenging and different from her previous experience in the United States, especially having taken a year off after completing the M.A. program before coming to NWU for doctoral study.

During her master’s program, “ME” taught introductory level ESL to adult immigrants at a non-profit organization for nearly two years. She also went back home after her first year at
NWU and taught English during the summer while testing a potential future data collection opportunity for her dissertation study.

“ME’s” wonderful sense of humor often filled interview sessions with lots of laughter. Although she seemed somewhat reserved in the beginning of the data collection period, she opened up during the interviews. “ME” said that she found the interviews comforting because she could be her “true self,” hence came her choice of the pseudonym: “ME.” Moreover, she was remarkably frank in talking about herself even when discussing rather sensitive issues such as her reticence in class and how she was stressed by the need to meet internal and external expectations for a doctoral student. She was especially expressive of her appreciation of the interviews as they provided her room to vent her stress and space to be her “real, true self.” She repeatedly commented that our interviews (“meetings” in her terms) were like “therapy sessions” (e.g., “ME”, I#8, Feb 27, 2009, E-original19) when she was challenged by new socialization experiences coupled with the culture shock she encountered.

In her first term, she took a doctoral seminar with other incoming doctoral students and another TESOL theory course. She soon identified a research interest on which she hoped to write her doctoral dissertation. In the second term, she had a class in critical pedagogy which significantly influenced her thinking about various issues in L2 education.

5.1.1.4 Shelley: “I am here to keep up with the development in this field.”

Shelley studied English (with a concentration in Business) during her undergraduate years and came to NWU as part of an exchange program between NWU and her home university

19 “I” stands for interview, # for the number in the sequence of interviews, and “E-original” denotes that the original quote was in English.
in China. Prior to coming to NWU, she had already completed one year of study in a graduate program in language education specializing in translation at her home university. She informed me that, among the several students who applied, she was the only one who satisfied the program requirements both in terms of teaching experience and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score. By studying at NWU, Shelley anticipated that she could survey the latest developments in the field of TESOL.

Studying at NWU was not Shelley’s first study abroad experience; she had spent two months in 2004 in Canada for TESOL training. She also chaperoned a group of students to the United States for a summer intensive language camp in 2007. She had taught secondary school students in China for ten years before she started graduate studies. While at graduate school in China, she also taught an undergraduate course in translation, which was her main interest. Regardless of such interest, she took a wide range of courses during her one-year stay at NWU ranging from an upper undergraduate introductory TESOL course to an advanced discourse analysis course.

Shelley was composed, often praised by her classmates for being “smart,” soft-spoken, and considerate yet quite firm when expressing her opinion on issues she found worth engaging. Unfortunately, unlike other participants, I could not reach her for further contact, particularly for debriefing of her data, after she returned to her home country upon completion of the exchange program at NWU. Nonetheless, before her departure, she assured me that taking sociocultural and critical language education courses helped her question and monitor her practice as teacher and be more aware of the sociocultural aspects of language teaching and learning. In fact, on her final paper in Graduate TESOL 2, she wrote:
If I turn my focus back to China, it is high time for TEFL teachers to relate language teaching to sociocultural factors by designing tasks and activities that raise students awareness of the cultural or pragmatic differences, by situating the individual students' learning goal in a wider family or social context, by creating a more friendly and favorable classroom atmosphere, or by activating and making full use of students' linguistic and other knowledge resources in class.

(Shelley, Final paper in Graduate TESOL 2, Dec 2008)

5.1.1.5 “STRUGGLE”: “I ‘happily’ struggle to tell the story of the less fortunate.”

“STRUGGLE,” like “ME,” was a doctoral student when she participated in this study. She was also the only focal participant in the study who was not in language education. She majored in elementary education (specializing in English education) in her home country, and held a master’s degree in TESL from a well-known institution in the United States before she embarked on her study at NWU. Although her main interest still remained in language, she shifted her focus to literacy as she found it to be more suitable for her current research interest. Her research interest was based on not only her knowledge gained from undergraduate studies but also her teaching experiences during her master’s program when she taught K-2 (from kindergarten to Grade 2) students, some of whom were ESL students.

She had developed a keen sense of empathy and desire to help children who are among the cultural, social, economic, and/or linguistic minority in her home country. She asserted that her research in the area would shed light on this expanding population and make it further known to the society. She anticipated that both children and society should benefit from her research findings.

“STRUGGLE” had been active in her own language learning. First of all, she had invested in various ways to maintain her English skills. She first learned English by spending her sixth grade year in the United States. After she returned, she practiced her English by exchanging
letters (in English) with her American friends. During her undergraduate years, “STRUGGLE” spent two summers in Canada. She also stayed in Japan for a few years as an exchange student. ”STRUGGLE” considers herself a hybrid language user of Korean/English. As a result, although most of her interview comments and other data were in Korean, some were mixed because she often code switched to English when she found it necessary or more effective in delivering her message. With her prior experiences and future goal, “STRUGGLE” was determined in her study.

At NWU, she actively participated in academic and departmental activities. Moreover, she perhaps took on the most proactive role as a participant of the study. She not only provided “official” data sources by sharing personal journals but also had numerous informal chats that ranged from few minutes to several hours as we discussed various issues in the field.

With her “extensive and various language socialization experiences in various places” and her English “as a strong capital,” “STRUGGLE” stressed that she “sympathizes with people who are less fortunate and wants to take initiatives” because she “wants to break off the chains of oppression and poverty” (STRUGGLE, I#2, Oct 3, 2008, K-original). STRUGGLE was passionate and determined to end cycles of exploitation. She believed that her study and eventual career in academia would give her a sense of purpose and allow her to harness her passion and talents.

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20 As mentioned earlier, “K-original” denotes that the original quote was in Korean, which has been translated into English and is italicized throughout this paper.
5.1.2 Participants’ choice of pseudonyms as identity construction

Upon reflecting on the pseudonyms selected by the participants, particularly “DRY,” “ME,” and “STRUGGLE”\textsuperscript{21}, it became apparent that pseudonyms can indeed effectively demonstrate how the participants discursively positioned themselves and identified their socialization processes. As noted by Shi (2002b), “[p]ersonal constructs of names and naming are a social process of establishing one’s existence. Different people attach different values to their names” (p. 147). Like pen names, the pseudonyms my participants selected revealed how they constructed their identity as participants of this study as well as members of a particular academic community where they are situated: i.e., a TESOL graduate program at a Canadian university.

5.1.2.1 Words manifesting their experiences: STRUGGLE, ME, and DRY

When asked for a pseudonym, one of the doctoral students at first insisted that I use her real name in my study because “[it] is important and I want to be called as who I am.” However, when asked to reconsider her decision for the sake of confidentiality, she chose the pseudonym STRUGGLE as it was a “theme” in her life at the time. She cautioned, though, such naming does not necessarily mean “something negative;” rather, it is a reflection of her effort. She happily “struggle[d] to have and ensure a better life not only for [herself], but also for the less fortunate [she] is trying to influence through [her] studies” (STRUGGLE, Personal correspondence, Sept 2, 2009, E-original).

\textsuperscript{21} These pseudonyms will be noted in all capital letters without double quotation marks from here on in order to avoid possible confusion with common corresponding words: the noun “struggle,” the pronoun “me,” and the adjective “dry.”
Another participant chose ME as her pseudonym after thinking about what the interviews and conversations meant to her. To her, they provided “a legitimate space to voice [her]self.” ME explained her choice of pseudonym:

[The interviews are] the only moment I can hear my own voice. Out of it, I am hiding the fears and insecurity from other peers and myself. So that’s ME [and] although it does not sound like a name, I think that’s one way to represent myself.

(ME, Personal correspondence, Sept 8, 2009, E-original)

To ME, the whole process of data collection, or rather, meeting and talking with a more experienced colleague (the researcher of this study), provided comfort and assurance that she was not alone in her challenges in her first year at NWU.

DRY was a second choice of pseudonym for one of the three master’s students. There was another and more general sounding pseudonym she selected in the beginning of the study, but she changed her mind during a debriefing session after data collection. She reasoned that when she looked back her first year at NWU, the adjective “dry” came to her mind. When asked to elaborate, she drew on the dichotomy of saturation versus dryness. Because she did not feel that she had been fully immersed and committed to (“saturated with”) her graduate studies as she had planned at the beginning of the semester, she felt “dry” (in a sense of "self-marginalization").

In other words, she claimed that she never felt truly like a legitimate member of her particular CoP of graduate students due to the many unanticipated distractions and challenges she encountered in her graduate studies (to be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7).
5.1.2.2 Names reflecting positioning of themselves: Eujin and Shelley

Another notable pseudonym choice came from a Korean participant who preferred to use a Korean name for her pseudonym. When asked, she chose a name of “Eujin (유진 in Korean),” a relatively common and gender-neutral name that could also be transliterated to English in many ways: e.g., “유” into You, Yu, and Eu; “진” into Jean, jean, Jin, jin, and even Gene or gene; and spelled as one word or separated by a hyphen or a space\(^{22}\) such as Eujean, You-Jin, or Yu gene. She explained that this pseudonym, like her Korean name, could be expressed in many different ways in English, and also represented who she was. With this pseudonym, she explained, she wanted to demonstrate that she, as a person and an entity, remained the same, regardless of changes in her representation (or identities): a theme that I will investigate further in the next chapter.

Finally, one participant chose to use her real English name as her pseudonym; however, I decided to change it to Shelley in order to ensure confidentiality. Although most people knew Shelley by her Chinese name during her study at NWU, Shelley also used her English name with those who were less familiar with her Chinese name and had difficulty pronouncing or remembering it. Shelley’s willingness to accommodate others by changing her name reflects her attitude in her socialization processes at NWU. Overall, she was more accommodating than some other focal participants like Eujin who often expressed acute resistance to challenges or demands she encountered at NWU.

\(^{22}\) Most Korean first names are actually a combination of two different letters, each with a distinctive meaning.
In sum, the pseudonyms that were chosen by the focal participants, i.e., how they are called or wish to be called by others, demonstrate a great deal about the construction and negotiation of their identities and provide a glimpse into their socialization processes. In what follows, the first, most prevalent and salient theme identified in their first socialization experiences, that is, discrepancies between their expectations and the expectations of the graduate school, will be discussed along with implications of these socialization processes in their subsequent approaches to further socialization.

5.2 Socialization into graduate studies

In this section, I will first discuss how some NNES students who embarked on their graduate studies found themselves challenged when faced with discrepancies between their expectations—and often (mis)understandings brought in from their EFL context—and actual local practices concerning the discourse on research. As graduate school is a site of socialization that resembles the future academic career of graduate students (Austin, 2002), it is important that we investigate their socialization in graduate school.

After discussing discrepancies between the expectations and the actual experiences the participants had, I will report how these discrepancies seemingly deterred some of the participants from constructively managing their graduate studies. This assumption is supported by Mercer’s (2011) argument that it is not so much the objective of the language learning situation, but rather what the students make of it that has an impact on students’ learning.

I will then further demonstrate how selecting and participating in particular courses posed another socialization challenge. I also note how participating in class discussion signified being a full and legitimate member of the graduate student CoP, along with various expectations
concerning academic literacies required of these teachers-turned-graduate students. Finally, discrepancies and challenges in defining critical thinking, another salient socialization challenge, will be discussed.

5.2.1 Being introduced to research as first academic socialization experience

One of the most salient and much-discussed topics among the participants in the first interviews was their misunderstanding of the nature of their graduate program and false assumptions they had transferred from their previous educational experiences that were not congruous with the local context.

First of all, among the three master’s students in this study, both DRY and Eujin\(^{23}\) noted that they experienced a genuine surprise when they found out that the program enrolled both Master of Education (M.Ed.) students and Master of Arts (M.A.) in Education students and that only M.A. students were required to write a thesis at the end of the program, and as M.Ed. students, they would not have to write a thesis.

Their argument seemed ungrounded given that they were officially informed before their arrival that they were to be M.Ed. students, and neither of them specified a research interest in their application for the graduate program, which is, in fact, one of the prerequisites for the M.A. program. The M.A. program targeted a select group of students who demonstrated strong academic performance, a research interest, and potential in conducting research. Both DRY and Eujin claimed that they “did not know about this at all” (Eujin, I#3, Sept 29, 2008, K-original). They were unaware of the differences of the two tracks in the master’s program, and they just

\(^{23}\) This was not of the same degree of concern for another master’s student Shelley as she was to obtain an M.A. degree from her home institution at the end of her program there.
“assumed” that other students were working toward the same M.Ed. degree since they were enrolled in the same TESOL classes (DRY, #4, Oct 30, 2008, K-original). Actually, the majority of students, over 90%, in the program were M.Ed. students.

However, when DRY and Eujin found themselves in the same class with a few other M.A. and doctoral students in the first term at NWU, where the discourse of research was prevalent, they claimed they were somewhat intimidated. They viewed the M.A. and doctoral students to be better equipped and more research focused, while they understood the M.Ed. students to be more practically oriented and “not for research” (DRY, #4, Oct 30, 2008, K-original). Their initial belief, stemming from their experience as teachers, seemed to be valid to them given that research is most often not on teachers’ immediate agenda. As Borg’s (2009) study of 505 teachers of English from 13 countries shows, teachers reported “moderate to low levels of reading and doing research” citing factors like lack of time, access to material, and content knowledge, which made them feel somewhat too limited to engage in research. In addition, “a number of attitudinal, conceptual, procedural, and institutional barriers to teacher research engagement” (p. 358) also deter teachers from conducting research in general. As they were to study TESOL, with a "T" in TESOL an abbreviation for teaching, both DRY and Eujin had not given much thought on the place for research in their studies before they came to NWU.

However, DRY and Eujin learned, as they were being socialized into graduate studies, that research is an essential part of their study, be they M.Ed. or otherwise, as it broadens their perspectives and makes them aware of their practices. In addition, research can indeed be quite practical as it “has potential to illuminate the practical problems that teachers and learners face” (McNamara, 2008, p. 304). Moreover, not all M.A. or even doctoral students were fully
socialized into research at first, as some of them were in process of clarifying and narrowing their research interest, as was the case with ME (ME, I#3, Oct 1, 2008, E-original).

Nevertheless, DRY and Eujin claimed that they found themselves not fully participating in the local academic community, in particular, in the class discussions of research interests in their first term at NWU. Eujin asserted that she felt being an M.Ed. student dictated what she could not do, especially when she was told that she was not eligible to write a thesis as she had not been admitted as an MA student. However, in the very first class she attended, she was asked to discuss her research interest in front of a mixed class of master’s students and new doctoral students. She recalled:

> When I was asked to talk about my research in class, I had no idea. I didn't even write about it in my SOP [statement of purpose]. I thought to myself, 'I am not supposed to do the research, right? After all, I am only an M.Ed. student.'

(Eujin, I#3, Sept 29, 2008, K-original)

Although DRY and Eujin did come to realize the place for discussion of research in their program after having been socialized in the graduate studies, they claimed to have felt they were not “entitled” to (do) research and felt “out of place” whenever topics centered on research. They also asserted that they could not fully participate in the courses where readings and discussions mostly focused on research in SLA and English education as they were still developing an understanding of academic research.

DRY and Eujin’s (mis)understanding of the role of research in their graduate studies has been identified as one of the significant factors in their subsequent socialization into their studies, but their paths were nevertheless divergent. This is partly because, as Mercer (2011) asserted, the

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24 This particular year, a large number of doctoral students were accepted to the program and many of them took this course.
meanings that each person attaches to his/her learning experiences are shaped by a number of factors that are unique to them. Although DRY and Eujin’s circumstances in the first term of their graduate studies seemed similar, their beliefs and perceptions of themselves were different, and so were their socialization processes. While Eujin took initiative in identifying her research interest and pursued her goal of writing a thesis, DRY was not as successful, for a number of reasons.

In fact, it was DRY who stated a strong desire to conduct research at the onset of her program at NWU even though she did not have a specific research topic on hand, as this would “open a possibility” for a further study should she decide to pursue it later (DRY, I#4, Oct 30, 2008, K-original). She explained that although she had “a very high expectation about [her]self,” the pressure to prove and impress others of her potential to conduct a research worked against her. Faced with the reality that her personal and work commitments often detracted from the quality of her academic performance, she became very self-conscious of her less than “impressive” achievement. Although DRY asserted that she had never given up the interest and desire to write a thesis, she still looked at it as the purview of a CoP of other more able students and felt she was excluded from this particular CoP.

Eujin, on the other hand, had a different socialization process. Although at first she too had rather vague ideas about research and her own research interest, she worked continuously to identify a research topic, contacted a possible supervisor for her thesis, demonstrated her potential to conduct a study, and completed all the paperwork necessary to write a thesis.

5.2.2 Socialization in the courses

Making choices and positioning oneself in the courses constituted another socialization process of the participants. Table 5.1 displays the courses the participants took in their first year
in the program. It is clear that many of these courses were advanced, research-oriented courses attended by both master’s and doctoral students.

Table 5.1  Courses taken by NNES participants in their first year of the TESOL program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Master’s students</th>
<th>Doctoral students</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>DRY</td>
<td>Eujin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 1, Sept – Dec 2008</td>
<td>Undergraduate TESOL 1</td>
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<td>Undergraduate TESOL 2</td>
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<td>Undergraduate TESOL 3</td>
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<td>Graduate Literacy 1</td>
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<td>Graduate TESOL 1</td>
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<td>Korean translation*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total number of courses taken</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
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Notes: * a course offered by another department (To be elaborated in Chapter 6).

The only required course for the master’s students was a course on research methodology in education, in which students were required to submit a research proposal as a final paper. The main purpose of the course, as stated in the course outline, was twofold: 1) to introduce students to the nature and purpose of various methods used in educational research which would be useful
in understanding educational phenomena, and 2) to guide novice students through the various steps and formalities of writing a research proposal. Moreover, students were encouraged to take this course early in the program so that by writing a proposal, they could get a sense of how research is constructed, conducted, and implemented, and thus gain an insider’s perspective on the kinds of theory and research they would be reading in their courses.

However, some M.Ed. students asserted that they were befuddled. On the one hand, as graduate students in a program where research is highly valued and emphasized, they were to learn and be able to write a research proposal. On the other hand, as M.Ed. students, they were not expected to write a thesis. Eujin questioned the purpose of this requirement; if M.Ed. students are not to do research, “why are we taking [research methodology] course then, writing a research proposal, a book review, and a final paper?” (Eujin, I#12, Jan 21, 2009, K-original). Moreover, Eujin and DRY noted that they did not feel qualified to discuss their research ideas with other M.A. or Ph.D. students who seemed to be entitled to do research (Eujin, I#12, Jan 21, 2009, K-original). However, these M.Ed. students were in fact the majority of the student population in class, who were encouraged to participate and contribute to class discussion whether they were to write a thesis or not. This assumption might not be consequent result of the actual positioning of others of these students, but more generally from their position as novices in the academic community not yet equipped with much expertise in research.

Later, DRY and Eujin asserted that this research methodology course was indeed one of the most helpful courses they had taken because it helped them to be informed practitioners capable of being critical about research conducted in the field. This realization did not come until toward the end of the program when they could actually see the value and various benefits of

As mentioned earlier, toward the end of the program and after she “developed [her] interest and learned about research more,” Eujin successfully completed a thesis. In this socialization process, she took various courses (including auditing courses outside the department), read other studies extensively, and contemplated and consulted “experts” (i.e., professors and students who were better versed in research) on possible research topics for her thesis. She noted that being socialized into research guided her process of being a graduate student:

_When I first started my M.Ed. program, I did not know anything about research. I assumed it would have been similar to other Ph.D. students as well… [Their topics were also] very general at first but they evolved. We could develop our research interest by taking courses. Currently I am developing my interest and learning about research._

(Eujin, I#12, Jan 21, 2009, K-original)

It should also be noted that some of the participants also took introductory and pedagogy focused upper-level undergraduate courses which dealt with more practical, everyday classroom issues. As former teachers, they noted that they did not feel so out of place in those courses, given that the materials discussed were more familiar to them, unlike the seemingly daunting discussion of research where they felt more like novices. However, this was not always the case as some of these undergraduate courses required (some) understanding of the Canadian teaching context, which some NNES students, Shelley in particular, found challenging as they were new to this new sociocultural context. Shelley explained the challenges she faced in these courses:

_[In] one of my [undergraduate] courses, we learn about TESOL and do practicum. They often talk about something I cannot understand, and I feel alienated and don’t talk much._
One problem is TESOL theories and research are different from TEFL [Teaching English as a Foreign Language] and ESL settings. When they talk about TESOL setting, they talk about Canadian school like secondary where culture system[s] and students’ target [goals] are different [from EFL].

(Shelley, I#4, Nov 4, 2008, E-original)

In sum, it was not always the practice or research focus in class that induced or discouraged participation from students; rather, it was the degree of expertise that the participants had that encouraged them to participate or remain silent in local academic literacy events such as class discussions at the beginning of their graduate studies.

5.2.3 Participating in class discussion to be a legitimate member of the CoP

Earlier I discussed how naming and names could serve as another indicator of one’s positioning in their situated CoP. Some of the focal participants, Eujin in particular, argued that being correctly remembered and called by her name by other peers and instructors was important, since it “symbolize[d]” to her that she was a legitimate member of the local academic CoP at NWU (Eujin, I#10, Nov 19, 2008, K-original).

Unfortunately, Eujin claimed that people in her classes often did not remember her name. She reasoned that although she was aware she needed to orally participate in class to be a legitimate member of this particular CoP, where active participation and contribution to class discussion are expected and appreciated, it is challenging for her to find the “appropriate phrases” and “the right turn taking moments”. She jokingly remarked that “by the time I am about to say something, someone else would jump in and say what I wanted to say all along. It happens all the time.” Eujin noted that her silence in class ostracized her in her academic CoPs although her "non-participation" does not necessarily mean not participating as she claimed to have participated silently (Cheng, 2000). Nevertheless, Eujin equated participating in class
discussions as being “in existence” and because she did not talk at all in class, she reasoned, she had become “no one” within the community (Eujin, I#10, Nov 19 2008, K-original). Her experience resonates with a Japanese participant in Morita’s study (2004) who found herself voiceless in one of the classes where she was not as familiar with the theoretical content as some others in class although in Eujin’s case, her silence had more to do with her perceived linguistic (in)competence.

ME also added that as she kept silent in class discussions most of the first term at NWU. She sometimes felt like “wall flower” (ME, I#3, Oct 1, 2008, E-original), i.e., not a full member of the academic CoP. However, in the second term, she reported that she actually felt “quite comfortable” being silent in class, as she could “absorb what others [were] contributing to class discussions and learn.” She argued that she was actually exercising her agency by not participating because doing so benefitted her more in a different way. For instance, ME claimed that by being silent and listening attentively to class discussion, she could compose her thoughts and internalize what others say better. She also asserted that she did not feel as ostracized as she did at first because she was participating “silently” (Cheng, 2000) (ME, I#10, Mar 27, 2009, E-original).

STRUGGLE reported a different idea. For her, “learning means evolving” (STRUGGLE, I#8, Feb 27, 2009, K-original). She argued that we should exercise our agency and participate in local academic practices like class discussion in order to be fuller and more legitimate members. Although she acknowledged that NOT participating was an exercise of individual agency, she still argued for practicing local conventions. She argued, class participation is needed in order to “express our agency, identity, and to negotiate power relations” (STRUGGLE, I#5, Nov 14, 2008, K-original).
It is also interesting to note that one of the professors interviewed commented that professors like her do not “judge” students solely by their participation in class discussions. To her, students’ ability to produce insightful, graduate-level writing is more valued than students’ verbal participation in class discussions (Instructor 2, I#1, Sept 20, 2009). In short, marginalization, inclusion, or even a sense of the boundaries of the academic CoP was not always parallel among all NNESs and other participants of CoP, and sometimes it was NNESs who seemed to be critical of themselves for not “participating” and therefore, evaluating themselves as not being a full member of a certain CoP.

During the interview, an interesting instance happened which, to some extent, demonstrated a rapport between the researcher and an interviewee, and at the same time, Eujin’s feeling of exclusion. Eujin referenced a well-known Korean poem titled “Flower” in which the central theme is that a person comes into existence and becomes an important being once s/he is called upon and acknowledged. Because we shared this cultural reference, Eujin and I found that we shared a special understanding and bond as Koreans (which was briefly mentioned in Chapter 4, 4.6.1 Role of the interviewer). Eujin asserted that she had been “thinking about the meaning in poem” because she felt frustrated and sometimes discouraged by that fact that she had not been recognized as someone with potential for research. She even included the full text of the poem in her paper for the Graduate TESOL 2 course which includes a line, “Now speak my name; one fitting this color and scent of mine... We all wish to become something... to be an unforgettable meaning”.25 (Eujin, I#10, Nov 19, 2008, K-original).

25 꽃(Flower) by Kim, Choon-soo (1955). Translated from Korean by Kim, Jong-gil.
This issue of participation and recognition leads to the next discussion on the different ideals and expectations held by the participants of this study and professors in the department, as the two seemed to hold unmatched ideas for what each should be and should provide. For instance, the terms "participation" and "being critical" held different meanings for the two sides and even among the participants themselves.

5.2.4 An expert teacher/L2 learner, but a novice graduate student

NWU offered extensive “helpful tips” and resources for its graduate students on its websites including “The grad school game plan” which lists the primary stages of their graduate education by advising the students on strategies for attaining academic and career success step by step. However, such resources were not always readily utilized by the participants, as they either did not know they existed or did not find them to be applicable to their own context.

As soon as the participants arrived at NWU, they realized there were gaps between the kind of graduate students the program anticipated versus the expectations that students (NNESs and NESs alike) brought to the program. In essence, the participants of this study perceived themselves as novices in graduate studies or newcomers in the academic community in Canada and expected “to learn” from the courses (Shelley, Pre-study questionnaire/interview, Sept 2008, E-original) and to have their research and pedagogical interests developed and shaped by the training from the very beginning. It turned out, according to the participants, they were expected to come as “ready-made” graduate students, particularly in terms of academic writing: that is, someone who could write suitable/adequate academic papers someone who could write,\textsuperscript{26} and,

\textsuperscript{26} Actually, some of the participants did not have any prior orientation to some conventions in academic writing in North America such as APA formatting, plagiarism policies, or even double spacing text. This issue will be discussed in language socialization in academic literacy and writing in Chapter 7.
sometimes, someone who had a fairly specific research interest from the beginning (Eujin, I#2, Oct 3, 2008, K-original).

For instance, ME noted that one of the instructors suggested that she ask someone to proofread her paper because although “the content [of her paper] is okay, grammar is problematic” (ME, I#3, Oct 1, 2008, E-original). As noted by Chang and Kanno (2010), different disciplines tend to place different values on the language competence of their students, and as TESOL is a program for English language teachers, it is expected that graduate students have strong competency in English; this was especially true for ME as a doctoral student.

Sometimes it was a certain genre of writing, such as a book review that students found unfamiliar, a point raised by Eujin and also echoed by DRY and Shelley: *I don’t know the format [of a book review] so I don’t know how to write one. So I am just writing* (Eujin, I#10, Nov 19, 2008, K-original).

For someone like DRY who had not previously studied English education, understanding the field in general was the first and foremost challenge: “*I didn’t study English education [in undergraduate] like others in the department. So I don’t have that basis – no schemata. I am not well-versed in SLA*” (DRY, I#4, Oct 30, 2008, K-original). Or sometimes it was a particular course in which specific materials (such as discourse analysis) were discussed and where there was a greater presence of more “experts” such as “*Ph.Ds who already have some prior knowledge and experience with the materials,*” (DRY, I#10, Jan 19, 2009, K-original) that challenged novice graduate students like DRY.
For Shelley, who would take five to six courses in one term with “no big issues” in her home department in China, doing the course reading and writing for three courses, which is the standard full time load for a graduate student at NWU, was overwhelming. DRY also seconded that she found her graduate courses included more reading assignments than she had expected (DRY, Pre-study questionnaires/interviews, Sept 2008, E/K-original; Shelley, Pre-study questionnaires/interviews, Sept 2008, E-original).

Finishing all the assignments [including reading and writing] on time was the most challenging part for me [at the beginning of the study]. I’ve expected them to be a challenge, but it is still beyond my expectation to find such a heavy load on me with three courses in one session. (I had 5-6 courses in one term back in my country!)

(Shelley, Pre-study questionnaire/interview, Sept 2008, E-original)

Such remarks resonate with Chang and Kanno’s (2010) study, where an NNES doctoral student noted NNESs, as compared to their NES peers, spend more than double the time doing the same amount of reading, partly owning to “linguistic and cultural barriers” (p. 685).

The doctoral students in this study were no exceptions either. As doctoral students, i.e., students with more years of experience and education, both ME and STRUGGLE identified added layers of expectations. Not only were they expected to have ample knowledge of the field and their research interest, but they were also expected to write in academic English easily, as reiterated by ME in the following: "Some people assume that graduate students cannot have a problem, or are not supposed to have a problem, 'cuz you need to solve your problems before you came to this program” (ME, I#4, Oct 30, 2008, E-original).

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27 The participants' views on themselves as writer and their own writing skills are discussed in Chapter 7.
Their experiences were not unique, as some previous studies have also reported discrepancies between the expectations of the institutions and the students (e.g., Kubota, 2009a; Storch, 2009). What should be noted here is that despite the years of training in English and teaching English, the TESOL graduate students in the study were not very different from students (NESs and NNESs alike) in other disciplines in that they still had to adjust and situate themselves into a new academic CoP. In other words, perhaps to the surprise of these “experts in English language”, they were challenged by the standards of advanced academic literacy and writing (that other "old timer/experts" were practicing) as well as the academic culture at NWU. Some participants reported that they struggled at first to comprehend even “simple” instructions like double spacing their writing or writing a critical book review.

Understandably, at the onset of their study, some focal participants, Shelley and Eujin in particular, found it especially discouraging to see that the resources they brought with them from their EFL experience, be they academic or professional, were not acknowledged or appreciated in class. The case in point was one of the upper level undergraduate TESOL practicum courses Shelley took where (quite fittingly) mostly Canadian schools and local contexts were discussed (Shelley, I#4, Nov 4, 2008, E-original).

Likewise, Shelley and Eujin reported frustration upon realizing that what they could contribute as EFL teachers did not seem to be immediately appreciated. As the core, albeit much-contested, theoretical premise of language socialization is that novices learn a language and appropriate cultural practices through interactions with more proficient persons (i.e., experts) who are willing to assist (Duff, 2003), the participants of this study believed that when they entered new academic CoPs, they were in a position to learn, but not so much to share their “expertise.” However, once the participants found themselves voluntarily contributing to class
discussions when they felt like experts on the topic (e.g., issues pertaining to EFL contexts), their initial attitudes and beliefs began to shift (see 6.3.2 in the next chapter). Similar to the participants in Morita’s studies (2000, 2004), the participants in my study experienced complex, unpredictable language socialization processes that were not unidirectional, and their perceptions and actual practices in graduate studies were often not all alike.

5.2.5 Defining critical thinking and writing

The essential parts of graduate program include developing students' critical thinking along with integrity, creativity, and ability to realize our societal responsibility in a globalized world.

(Paraphrased from the graduate studies website at NWU)

As noted in the above excerpt, being able to think and write critically was required of graduate students at NWU; similarly, a prominent discourse in academic literacy in the TESOL department at NWU was critical thinking. Throughout the official interviews, the focal participants discussed numerous instances where they were asked to think critically and write a critical paper for the courses they were taking. The following are a set of instructions from the course syllabi the participants received:

Undergraduate TESOL 3: The examination and critical discussion of these topics...
Graduate TESOL 1: Readings have been selected for critical consideration and discussion
Graduate TESOL 2: Objective – To raise critical questions still to be resolved in studies… Assignment – Critical analysis of published studies…
Graduate TESOL 3: Objective – Critically assess competing and complementary theories…
Graduate TESOL 4: To enable students to critically evaluate the research
Graduate Literacy 1: Objective – To become familiar with and critically examine theoretical perspectives… Assignment – Critical questions/reading response journal
Some of the focal students found this concept somewhat new (DRY and ME), while others claimed that they had been “doing it all along” (Eujin and STRUGGLE). Regardless, being “critical” was central in the participants’ role as graduate students throughout their studies. As Atkinson (1997) pointed out, however, critical thinking is “neither generalizable nor transferable” (p. 85), as it is socially constructed and specific to local contexts.

Therefore, I explored what my participants thought being critical meant and how they interpreted what their professors meant by “critical” since the term “critical thinking” has not been consistently defined in the literature (Hawkins, 1998, p. 131). Critical thinking is a social practice rather than a decontextualised cognitive skill one can readily master, and by no means is it uniform (Atkinson, 1997). For instance, one of the instructors interviewed commented that critical thinking means questioning our own assumptions, assessing what is taken for granted, and "critically" reflecting on our practices (Instructor 1 I#1, Sept 20, 2009). Likewise, each participant had different definitions for critical thinking depending on the understandings they acquired within the contexts of their various socialization processes in academic literacy at NWU. STRUGGLE, DRY, ME, and Eujin explained how they interpret “being critical”.

First of all, STRUGGLE understood critical thinking from a perspective of power relations which suitably reflected her current research interests and her expanding knowledge of the field: *Being critical means being aware of and looking at power relations in contexts. It also means reflecting on things that are being taken for granted* (STRUGGLE, Post-study questionnaire, Sept 2009, K-original).

Meanwhile, Eujin resisted and questioned the assumption that some NNES students were not trained to do critical thinking (Kubota, 1999a, 1999b). For Eujin, being critical, or “*identifying something that could be improved and providing reasons and suggestions*” (Eujin,
post-study questionnaire, Sept 2009, K-original), was something she had known to do all along in her own terms. Also, it is not something that is exclusively owned or practiced by a particular group of people.

In contrast, for DRY, critical thinking was something she learned to do in order to participate in local literacy practice. She asserted that this needs to be learned and can be acquired by experience.

_At first, when professors talked about critical thinking, I thought it was something special, something only NESs have or were born with. But through debates and discussions, I learned to do it myself. In other words, I think you need to learn to do critical thinking. It can be acquired by experience._

(DRY, post-study questionnaire, Sept 2009, K-original)

ME asserted that “being critical... means having ability to analyze data, situations and contexts. In other words, it means being analytical” (ME, Post-study questionnaire, Sept 2009, E-original). Also, similar to DRY, ME viewed critical thinking as something that needs to be acquired and noted that doing so posed a challenge for her at the beginning of her study at NWU.

ME’s positioning reiterated Atkinson’s claim (1997) that treating critical thinking as social practice “may marginalize subcultural groups” who are not familiar with the practice. ME explained that in one of her first term courses she was asked to provide weekly response papers on the required readings. Since the responses were sent out to everyone in the course, it was emotionally very high stakes for her. She felt exposed and worried about being judged openly about her writing and critical thinking, areas in which she felt her skills did not measure up to those of other doctoral students in the course. She even commented that she sometimes “felt like a high school student who is not yet trained in critical thinking” (I#2, Sep 25, 2008, E-original). Although she might not have realized it at the time, the very fact that she was aware of her own
challenges indicates that she indeed was thinking “critically”. In fact, critical thinking is defined as “self-reflexive justification strategy” by Siegel (1989, p. 9). Moreover, critical thinking is a skill that can be easily learned and accessed by students from all cultures (Kubota, 1999a, 1999b).

In sum, the participants’ diverse understandings and interpretations of the meaning of “critical” symbolizes their diverse language socialization processes in a new academic CoP. As central as critical thinking was in the participants’ curricula, learning to think critically in their local academic CoP was one of the first and most significant aspects of the academic socialization processes of the NNES participants. Their socialization processes met further challenges as they encountered the much-contested dichotomized notion of NES-NNES and underwent subsequent negotiations of their multiple identities, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Also, the theme of different expectations, diverse needs and various outcomes of socialization will be revisited in Chapter 7, in the discussions of socialization in academic writing.

5.3 Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the NNES participants of the study and analyzed their socialization experiences in the first year of their graduate program at NWU. I also highlighted the most salient socialization challenges they identified, for instance, being introduced to research and finding gaps between their prior expectations and the current demands of their graduate studies. Also discussed were various understandings and interpretations of “being critical” or “critical thinking” which demonstrated variability in their socialization processes. In the next chapter, how these participants positioned themselves and were positioned by others in different contexts will be discussed, especially in terms of the various ways in which the participants constructed and negotiated identities as part of their socialization processes.
Chapter 6

NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITIES AS SOCIALIZATION PRACTICE

In this chapter, I will further explore how the NNES\textsuperscript{28} participants of this study positioned themselves in a new environment by negotiating and sometimes resisting NNES labels and/or identities. In particular, I address the following guiding question: How do NNES graduate students in a TESOL program negotiate their identities as they switch roles from EFL teachers to ESL graduate students, and how do they participate in academic communities of practice?

First of all, I discuss how some NNESs adhere to native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992), considering NESs\textsuperscript{29} as the norm and themselves as linguistically weaker counterparts. I also elaborate how some NNES participants of this study find themselves being categorized as NNESs, not necessarily by having been born and raised as NNESs, but by “acting like” one in terms of not fully participating in various local academic CoPs. I also note how NNESs resist seemingly uniform labels like NNESs, which often inaccurately reflect who and what these students are. I pay particular attention to the discursive activities NNES graduate students were engaged in when attempting to negotiate their identities. In doing so, I argue how fluid and transformable these identities are by highlighting the way participants constantly negotiated and reconstructed their multiple and often hybrid identities in various contexts (Morita, 2004; Norton & McKinney, 2011). I also discuss the sudden and acute realization of their non-native status due to their inadequate linguistic expertise as well as sociocultural and local contextual knowledge.

\textsuperscript{28} As mentioned in Chapter 1, the use of dichotomized notions/terms of NNESs and NESs is meant for illustration purposes only, not to reify but to highlight and problematize their inaccuracy (Rampton, 1990).

\textsuperscript{29} Although what exactly constitutes being an NES can be controversial (Davies, 1991)
I conclude the chapter with a summary, which leads to Chapter 7, where I further discuss academic literacy with a focus on academic writing, a part of the socialization process that participants found to be especially daunting during their first year as graduate students.

6.1 Socialization into acting like and being an NNES

6.1.1 NES as a role model

As mentioned in Chapter 3, even though the NES/NNES dichotomy has been widely contested, the notion of the idealized native speaker (Leung, Harris, & Rampton, 1997), or native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992), prevailed among some of the NNES participants of this study during the early interviews. Also, similar to the participants in Choi’s (2007) study, the participants in this study demonstrated considerable variability in the beliefs they held and the way they constructed their NNES identity. Especially in the beginning of their study at NWU, NNESs often viewed their NES colleagues as role models, mainly due to their (perceived) linguistic superiority and more skillful engagement in various academic practices such as in-class discussions (see Chapter 5, 5.2.3).

For instance, since some NNES students tended to view their NES cohorts as experts in these areas, they sometimes asked NES peers to proofread their papers. Shelley, for instance, commented that she would willingly “consult [her] native colleagues for some proofreading and APA” whenever she could (Shelley, I#2, Oct 3, 2008, E-original). However, not all NNES participants favored this practice. DRY in particular rejected this by saying that she was more of an expert on the content of some of the courses she was taking, and therefore, NES colleagues who were not taking those courses, despite their linguistic fluency, might not have been of much help (DRY, Journal, April 14, 2009). DRY also believed that some of her NNES peers’
difficulties with writing derived not from their lack of critical thinking skills or native-like fluency, but rather, from their lack of a broad worldview and relevant job experiences (DRY, I#14, Apr 23, 2009, K-original).

STRUGGLE, on the other hand, saw this practice more as a power issue, as “we [NNESs] are often in the position to receive editing [due to our non target-like English]” (Joint I#1, Nov 6, 2008, K-original). Eujin also found this practice to be uncomfortable, as she did not want “another colleague to look at my paper. We are friends, taking the same course and suddenly [I hate to say] ‘would you proofread my paper?’” She further commented, “I hate to have that feeling of having to learn from my [NES] colleagues” since, she reasoned, NESs and NNESs were supposed to be equal as graduate students (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original).

In short, not all NNESs were socialized into peer proofreading and editing practices (or academic writing in general) in the same way (Hassan, 2011). Coming from a teacher-centered and hierarchical academic tradition, some NNESs, Eujin and STRUGGLE in particular, did not view the peer proofreading and critiquing process as a common academic practice or learning opportunity to ensure that they would meet institutional requirements for the quality and clarity of writing (Leestma & Walberg, 1992); but rather, they saw it as an indication of their inadequate L2 proficiency and their subsequent unequal positioning as NNES students. Other NNESs like Shelley were more open to such practices.

On the other hand, besides being linguistically more confident, some NES peers were not necessarily viewed as experts in certain sociocultural or academic contexts. As noted by Duff

30 As mentioned in Chapter 5, “K-original” denotes that the original quote was in Korean, and all non-English quotes are italicized.

31 Two joint interviews took place on the same day (Nov 7, 2008): Joint interview #2 was conducted in English while #3 was done in Korean.
some highly verbal NES students may actively and enthusiastically engage in class
discussions, but that does not necessarily prove their expertise in content areas or in various
contexts in academic literacy. For instance, Shelley observed a seemingly “well-versed” NES
producing empty rhetoric. She reported that he would often dominate the class or small group
discussions, but was unable to explain particular concepts, and would shift the topic often, in
what seemed to Shelley to be an attempt to hide his ignorance (Shelley, I#4, Nov 18, 2008, E-
original). Obviously, as will be discussed later in the chapter, what is most valued in the CoP of
graduate studies is critical analysis accompanied by linguistic proficiency, and not just linguistic
competence alone.

In sum, although not all NES peers were equally viewed as having expertise, some
NNESs considered most of their NES colleagues to be sociolinguistic role models and presumed
linguistic expertise in their writing. This positioning by some NNESs negatively affected their
feelings of legitimacy in their academic CoP, often silencing them in class. They reported that
they felt they lacked the linguistic and academic skills to orally contribute to class, as discussed
earlier in Chapter 5 (5.2.3) (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original).

6.1.1.1 NESs also experience challenges

Not surprisingly, NESs experienced their own sociocultural and academic challenges in
their first term as graduate students. Although the definition of NES has been contested, NES in
this paper is used to refer to the following qualities in the individual: that is, someone who has
acquired the language in early childhood (Davies, 1991; McArthur, 1992; Phillipson, 1992) and
maintains the use of the language (M. Kubota, 2004; McArthur, 1992); someone who is able to
communicate within different social settings (Stern, 1983); and someone who identifies with or
is identified by a language community (Davies, 1991; Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Nayar, 1997). It
has been argued (e.g., Duff, 2010) that being NESs does not grant automatic access to academic CoPs nor does it guarantee competent language use. Whether one is an NES or an NNES, language use is “variable, emergent, contextual, and subject to hybridity and change” (Sewell, 2013, p. 3), and adherence to “native norms” is not necessarily required for effective communication in every case (Seidlhofer, 2011). In short, as expertise in any given academic CoP is something that needs to be demonstrated, it is not necessarily an attribute of all NESs.

As Morita (2000) asserted, it is not uncommon for graduate TESOL students, especially those who had not been students for some time, to need to be socialized into the new discursive norms in academia, regardless of their linguistic proficiency. The participants of this study and their colleagues were no exception. For instance, Shelley stated that she had witnessed many NESs experiencing difficulties, not only in their studies but also in academic discourse, as they too had to be socialized into graduate studies (Shelley, I#4, Nov 4, 2008, E-original). This comment resonates with the findings of Duff’s (2010) study. Eujin recalled having witnessed one of her NES peers being “visibly nervous... shaking his hands... silent in class...” at first and becoming more at ease as he was socialized into the program (Joint I#8, Apr 28, 2009, K-original). ME noted that her “anxiety was released” when she realized that she was not the only one struggling with a certain research topic discussed in class (ME, I#4, Oct 30, 32008, E-original). Eujin and STRUGGLE also reported that NESs who had been English teachers overseas for several years told them that they had experienced reverse culture shock upon their return, not only in everyday life but also in academic contexts (Joint I#8, Apr 28, 2009, K-original). All in all, socialization into a graduate program was challenging for most students, both NESs and NNESs.
6.1.2 Defining NNES

Park (2007) argued that NES and NNES identities\(^{32}\) are actually social categories that are “locally occasioned” and negotiated in an ongoing interaction, which consequently creates “an asymmetrical alignment” of the participants (p. 339). Similarly, participants in this study asserted that being considered as an NNES did not mean “being” one because of birth or upbringing; rather, it meant “acting like one.” In other words, when they displayed knowledge or familiarity with the conventions at NWU in terms of language, academic expectations, and sociocultural knowledge, they considered themselves to be legitimate members of the CoP and, therefore, they did not feel "the stigma of being an NNES" as acutely. Such a view echoes Foucault’s (1972) idea that power is generated not from an individual, but from the knowledge s/he holds and displays. In other words, it was when NNESs fell short of expectations in meeting local conventions that they felt they were immediately essentialized as NNESs and considered inferior to their NES counterparts, the "experts" and legitimate participants in the CoP. In essence, acting like NNESs interfered with their ability to form symmetrical relationships with NESs.

Eujin and DRY both noted that “acting like NESs” involves claiming an identity as an English speaker and taking ownership of the English language rather than having the native intuition of the language or having been born as NESs. For them, acting like NESs comprises exercising agency over the English language and the field they study with adequate competency. For example, Shelley mentioned an article discussed in class that argued that the reason some NNESs (mainly Asian students) wanted to improve their pronunciation was not to seek NES

\(^{32}\) Such dichotomy reflects traditional discourse on the linguistic (in)competence of NNESs versus NESs, and distinguishing the two as different entities. Also, at the outset of the study, none of the participants had embraced constructs such as multicompetence, that is, they did not consider themselves as “L2 users”. (Cook, 1991; 1999).
identity but to demonstrate their confidence or ability to learn English (Shelley, I#8, Feb 27, 2009, E-original). In other words, Eujin and DRY felt that they should act like NESs in order to become more legitimate member of the academic CoP.

Some of the focal participants reported that they were sometimes very self-conscious of their non-target-like English. They were concerned about bringing up even seemingly innocent topics such as promoting English as lingua franca (ELF) in class, as it might have been viewed as an attempt to justify or defend their non-target-like pronunciation. Shelley voiced her concern on the issue:

If we cannot improve our pronunciation or talk like natives, our promotion of ELF pronunciation could be regarded or seen as [an] attempt to justify our non-nativeness. Some people would say “you are trying to find excuses to simplify English and you are actually resisting to talk in real English, standard or proper English.” You are seeking a safe house to hide like in Canagarajah’s article. Because you cannot communicate in a proper way, you are trying to localize [English] and communicate with other NNESs [with simple English].

(Shelley, I#8, Feb 27, 2009, E-original)

In other words, as an NNES, Shelley was apprehensive about supporting ELF or less standard English because she feared that her motives would be questioned. Moreover, Shelley felt she would be acting like an NNES and further distancing herself from the legitimate members of the CoP of native-like fluency. It should be noted that in making her point, Shelley demonstrated her competence as a graduate student by creating a hypothetical counter-discourse and quoting a study she read in a class at NWU.

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6.1.3 Resisting stigmatized and highlighted NNES labeling

NNES identities, both generally perceived and self-imposed, often preceded one’s identity as “one of the new graduate students” as noted by Eujin (I#10, Jan 21, 2009, K-original). Often negative NNES labeling seemed to have been used to describe NNESs, and some of the participants resisted that labeling more than others. For instance, Eujin resisted being labeled as an NNES, someone who is often stigmatized as performing not as sufficiently or reliably in their academic and sociocultural contexts. She simply wanted to be considered a “graduate student” at NWU, the identity she wished to have constructed at NWU. Her remark resonated with findings in Rich and Troudi’s (2006) study reviewed earlier where the NNES identity (in particular, Muslim) was highlighted rather than the identity the participant of their study first constructed: an international M.Ed. student. She further noted that she was more often than not mistaken for an ESL or exchange student, perhaps partly owing to some of the obvious NNES characteristics she demonstrated such as non-target-like pronunciation. Eujin argued:

> It seems even if we are master’s students or not, NESs look at us as someone who is here to learn English and NNESs! Even an undergrad once [mis]took me as an exchange student [because of my accent]. But I think of myself as equal to other NES colleagues. Why should I think otherwise?

(Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original)

STRUGGLE, too, resisted the stereotyped and simplified labeling of NNESs, adding “I resist the idea that we are always in the position to accept knowledge here... Although we may have some NNES qualities, we shouldn’t confine ourselves into that category only” (STRUGGLE, I#8, Feb 27, 2009, K-original). ME also noted that “grouping is not always fair [because of the hybrid identities we have]... [Being] essentializ[ed] as NNESs is frustrating... Sometimes we feel
we belong to neither place [neither NES or NNES]...” (ME, I#10, Jan 19, 2009, E-original).

Their frustration supports an argument that essentializing any one group by attributing certain qualities only can be misleading. For example, as noted by Mulder and Hulstijn (2011), not all NESs are alike as not all of them can be expected to have the same level of linguistic skills, or provide linguistic assistance to L2 learners (Dobao, 2012).

In an attempt to avoid being labeled as an NNES, some participants were proactive in many aspects of their socialization. For instance, Eujin took several courses outside the department to broaden her knowledge and social spectrum. DRY tried to be active and visible by sitting in on doctoral defenses (DRY, Journal, Oct 19, 2008). STRUGGLE emphasized that she actively participated in class discussions after learning “the benefit of talking well” during her master’s program at another North American institution. She asserted:

*I didn’t like the fact that I was silent at first. I tried to speak up in my classes and even took notes to plan for it. During my MA program, I resisted being essentialized as Asian, a quiet one, and ended up speaking up a lot.*

(STRUGGLE, I#7, Jan 29, 2009, K-original)

However, as Eujin argued earlier, such efforts were not necessarily rewarded as they found themselves still regarded as L2 learners because their English, academic or for other purposes, was still not as proficient as that of other NESs. She claimed, “NESs look at us as someone who is here to learn English and NNESs...[because of my accent]” (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original). ME noted: “the title ‘L2 learner’ always lingers in me as a learner, not a graduate student or a [former] teacher” (STRUGGLE, Class paper, Nov 2008, E-original).
6.1.4 Feeling marginalized by the discourse of marginalization

Interestingly, it was the very focus and nature of their graduate study, in which the dichotomized notion of NESs and NNESs, issues of identity and marginalization of novices are problematized and critically questioned and discussed, that led some NNESs to be acutely aware of their non-nativeness, and sometimes to be more self-conscious of their performance in their L2. At the same time, however, it was a clear indication that these NNES students, who were from a more traditional cognitive and psycholinguistically oriented language learning tradition prior to embarking on their graduate studies at NWU, came to develop a sociocultural lens to language learning and were able to critique the dichotomy of NES and NNES.

Like the participants in Pavlenko and Blackledge's (2004) study, DRY and Eujin argued that they had never felt so much like NNESs before they came to study at NWU. In other words, the whole discourse of marginalization actually made some of the participants feel marginalized, and often put on the spot. Whenever there were discussions about NNESs, identity, and marginalization, as opposed to their NES counterparts, they could not help but think they indeed belonged to these categories. DRY explained, “When I am with NESs, I feel very much as an NNES... I know in theory, we can have hybrid identity; but from time to time, I cannot help but doubt if it could actually have hybrid identity...” (DRY, I#10, Jan 19, 2009, K-original). She added, “as an immigrant, I always consider myself a hybrid of Korean-Canadian, and I never really felt like a non-native, or realized that I am indeed a non-native until I read about it at NWU” (DRY, I#1, Sept 2008, Pre-study questionnaire, E/K-original).

Eujin likewise asserted she had experienced a similar shock upon reading the introduction chapter of Gass and Selinker (2008), where it is stated that SLA is “the study of why
most second language learners do not achieve the same degree of proficiency in a second language as they do in their native language” (p. 1). Eujin believed she could better her English skills and be near native-like if she tried “hard enough,” which was one of the driving forces for her to pursue a further study in an ESL context. However, reading the introduction to Gass and Selinker undermined her hope that she could indeed achieve NES-like proficiency. Although this very statement was much contested and critiqued in class, it did not prevent her from being discouraged. Eujin explained that the message reified the realization she had after coming to Canada: that her English was inadequate for effective communication. Upon realizing that, she felt like “the world closed on her” (Joint I#1, Nov 6, 2008, K-original). It was English that closed the world on her, a recurrent theme which will be revisited in the discussion of language socialization in writing in the next chapter. One notable aspect of the socialization process Eujin also discussed was that, in the beginning of her program, she accepted her “fate as NNES.” She concealed her frustration with her command of the English language, which did not allow the same effectiveness in expressing sophisticated ideas or the depth of her expanding knowledge in the field. However, one of her professors pointed out that, contrary to what many NNESs, including Eujin, may believe, the problem for many new master’s students is often the lack of depth of analysis, and not English itself. Their assignments are often “superficial, perhaps due to a combination of weaker English skills and less experience with academic writing, argumentation, and analysis” (Instructor #2, Comments, Nov 2008).

Similar to the discourse of marginalization that made some NNESs realize of their non-nativelessness, discussions of power differences and critical analysis of research in the field made them more acutely aware of the discrepancies between socioculturally informed theories like the social turn (Block, 2003 as discussed in Graduate TESOL 2 class) and actual practices.
STRUGGLE pointed out that despite all the heated discussion and open-mindedness in class, the real world was different:

In class we talk about how important academic voice is and how significant content is and we get all heated up and all agree to those in class. But once we step out of the class, the whole context shifts.

(Joint I#1, Nov 6, 2008, K-original)

Similarly, such discrepancies between in-class “warm/comforting” theories and out of class “cold/cruel” realities (in Eujin’s words) prompted Eujin to question theories that seemed too idealistic. Although she asserted that she very much enjoyed reading and learning about sociocultural perspectives on language learning (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original), which are supposed to empower students, particularly NNESs, she claimed she felt even more powerless after learning about the power differences in sociocultural interpretation of language learning. In her words,

When I studied cognitive [theories in language learning] before, I was okay with thinking of myself as not good enough, blaming myself for my own shortcomings. But after learning about social perspectives, I felt helpless. This is something that has to be co-constructed and negotiated. Then what can I do about this person’s [NES] negative attitude toward NNESs?... While learning about sociocultural theories of language learning, I came to realize such practices even more.

(Joint I#8, Apr 28, 2009, K-original)

In other words, after experiencing a nurturing, constructive, and idealistic environment in class, some NNESs reported to have felt protected and thereby perceived the discrepancies with the world outside the class even more acutely. Eujin remembered being similarly upset while taking a class in her home country, when one of the instructors talked about the advantages of a communicative approach while continuously “lecturing” about it to students (Joint I#8, Apr 28,
2009, K-original). She did not realize at that time that this new understanding was empowering her. The new critical lens these graduate students developed as they socialized into the discourse of the sociocultural aspect of L2 learning helped them understand L2 learning as something that is socioculturally co-constructed rather than a “fate” they were born into (cf., Eujin’s comment that English was her “eopbo [fate]” in 5.1.1.2 in Chapter). In fact, NNESs students, including Eujin, were reminded of their own agency when learning, including being critical about their own learning. That is, Eujin experienced some “positive personal transformations” (Morita, 2004, p. 586).

In sum, in the beginning of this study, the participants felt excluded or marginalized once they became more aware of the discourses of marginalization despite the intentions of the discussions. However, learning about and being socialized in the discourse of sociocultural views on language learning along with the issues of identity, ownership, and power, enabled the participants to be critical about their understanding of L2 learning, which helped them contemplate the issues of NESs and NNESs, resist essentialized notions of NNESs, and question theories and practices: in other words, they were negotiating their membership in this academic CoP (Morita, 2004).

6.1.5 Discourse of ownership and identity construction

As power is not a certain institution (regulations) but practices contextualized in a particular situation where power is exercised (Foucault, 1982), many of the participants reported seemingly conflicting instances in which they exercised power. For instance, the NNES participants were experiencing empowerment in different settings or different ways; that is, the participants felt varying degrees of ownership toward English language and negotiated various
identities. In DRY’s case, she claimed more ownership and knowledge of Canadian life and spoken English as opposed to other NNESs, as she was the only landed immigrant and had more years of experience living in Canada (DRY, I#14, Apr 23, 2009, K-original). Eujin and Shelley had stronger identities as graduate students due to their expanding knowledge in the field and stronger use of academic discourse. STRUGGLE, one of the doctoral students, on the other hand, noted that she believed that the Ph.D. was, in fact, a process of identity construction (Joint #1, Nov 6, 2008, K-original). She explained that she needed to demonstrate confidence as a legitimate member of a community of doctoral students. In other words, it did not matter what one was, what mattered more was what one did and how one acted. For STRUGGLE, being a doctoral student empowered her and gave her more confidence. She asserted that being a doctoral student meant demonstrating depth and breadth of understanding of the field, taking initiatives in her study, and eventually contributing to the field with her own research (STRUGGLE, I#7, Jan 29, 3009, K-original).

Likewise, as shown in the earlier discussion of reported resistance to the essentialization of an NNES status, varying degrees of negotiation and practice of agency were evident in NNESs’ socialization processes, namely, in instances of local identity construction, which were manifested through discourse. In the next section, I will discuss how the focal participants constructed and negotiated their multiple identities.

6.2 NNES positioning contested: Construction and negotiation of novice and expert identities

In Chapter 3, I pointed out how the dichotomized and essentializing distinction between NESs and NNESs has been often contested and questioned by scholars (Davies, 2003; Halic,
Greenberg & Paulus, 2009; Zamel & Spack, 2004). I also reviewed a number of studies that question the NES/NNES dichotomy (Choi, 2007; Hassan, 2011; Park, 2006; Rich & Troudi, 2006). At first glance, the participants of the study also seemed to espouse a fixed and dichotomized notion about what NNES and NES students should be and how they should act, often identifying themselves as novice NNESs in a new socialization context. However, a close analysis of the participants’ discursive activities revealed that they shifted and negotiated their identities, not only as NNES but also in various other roles.

Before discussing their identity construction and negotiation, however, it should be pointed out that the very notion of identity (Norton, 1997; Norton & McKinney, 2011) was new to some NNES participants whose previous work had been in EFL contexts. For instance, before embarking on graduate study at NWU, Eujin had never questioned her NNES identity or NES’ ownership of the English language. Other participants also asserted that they were trained mostly based on psycholinguistic and cognitive approaches, where L2 learners are often considered to be in an interlanguage stage working toward an ultimate attainment: for example, to be an NES-like speaker (discussed in Chapter 2). The attainment of grammatical accuracy tended to precede seemingly less urgent or important issues like identity. However, after having read various studies on the issues of identity, ownership, and positioning of L2 learners, the participants learned to be more critical and started to question what they used to take for granted.

6.2.1 Questioning the discourse of identity in EFL: The case of Shelley

During one of the joint interviews (Joint I#2, Nov 7, 2008, E-original), the topic of identity was generated after participants talked about online postings they were asked to do as part of their course assignments. In one particular posting, DRY reflected extensively on her struggles as a newcomer in a new environment who had to constantly negotiate her identity as an
L2 speaker as well as an immigrant. To this, Shelley responded that she did not believe “identity would be one problem” for her, and noted that she had “never had identity problems” when she was in an EFL context. For Shelley, the considering the identity of language learners was a foreign concept and seemed unnecessary. Although both Shelley and DRY were "NNESs," Shelley, who was planning on going back to her home country after completing her study, did not see the need for identity negotiation as much as DRY, who had made a home in Canada. After all, in an EFL context, as DRY commented, “we [NNESs in EFL contexts] always talked about language problems but not identity problems.” Likewise, Shelley further noted that there were a number of issues discussed in the courses that would be more of an immediate concern for her when she returned to her country (i.e., an EFL context). She remarked, “Who cares about identity in foreign language situations?” (Shelley, I#7, Feb 2, 2009, E-original).

6.2.2 Dichotomized identities and marginalization: The case of Eujin

In order to effectively highlight and analyze the particular discourse that Eujin used to construct and negotiate her identity, I employed discourse analysis approaches (Fairclough, 2003; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Gee, 2011; Widdowson, 1998). In particular, I used a detailed transcription of the interview with numbered lines such as in excerpts 6.1.1, 6.1.2, and 6.1.3, which are segments from a three-hour long interview. Eujin discussed her experience in one of the research methodology courses she took in the previous term, where she was the only NNES student.

The lines 13-15 in excerpt 6.1.1 on the following page demonstrate how Eujin constructed her identity as an NNES and novice as opposed to her NES counterparts, who she

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33 Transcription conventions for excerpts can be found in Appendix E.
perceived as experts in the social practice of verbally and actively participating in class discussions.

What is particularly noticeable in the excerpt (lines 15-17) is that she also noted how discussion of the marginalization of NNESs had actually contributed to her increased awareness of being marginalized and to the subsequent identification of herself as a novice in a particular social activity and in a CoP (as discussed in 6.1.4), namely class discussions. The lines 21-23 in the excerpt show how she identified herself as NNES and her wish to be a full member of another CoP of discussion among NESs.

Excerpt 6.1.1 (Eujin, I#12, Jan 21, 2009, K-original)

01 Eujin: you know in our country, culture is like if you participate actively in class like answering questions, other students hate it. ...
04 M: Why is s/he showing off?
05 Eujin: Yeah something like that. She is good, a good student getting good marks. But, she should stay quiet in class.
08 M: That’s what seems to be important?
09 Eujin: You know, everyone in Korea knows. Yes, she is good but she doesn’t show it off. Something like that. But here is like, even for something not that important, they [students in class] answer like blah blah (0.4) But then, <I didn’t know about such culture> before. But after coming here, I can tell it’s marginalization. [Because] I learned about it (0.3.) I could feel that now.
17 If I hadn’t known about it like before, oh well I am like this anyway. I would simply think like this. But now, I learned and can feel it.
19 it’s really like, oh no, not this, you know?
21 [For instance] Three of us were talking in a group, and then only two [NESs] ended up talking [excluding me]. I did not understand what they were saying anyway.

An interesting usage of words in this excerpt is when Eujin demonstrates her rather fixed ideas of cultural identity by contrasting the social practices and cultures of two countries, Korea and Canada, which she expressed with deictic indexicals (Lo, 2006): “our”, “culture” (line 1)

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34 Interviewer and researcher of this study
versus “here,” “they,” and “such culture” (lines 11-12, 14). She also identified herself as novice by positioning herself a silent observer unable to understand the discussions of others (lines 21-23). Eujin started off the discussion by distinguishing how “in our country” [as opposed to ‘here’] social practices are different, using the difference in participation norms in each country as an example; she claims that actively answering and asking questions in class is avoided because “other students hate it” (line 3). She argued that “everyone” (line 9) in Korea knows that students demonstrate their knowledge and participation by “getting good marks” (line 6) and “stay[ing] quiet” (lines 6-7) instead of “show[ing] it off” (lines 4 and 10). In Canada, she noted (lines 12-14), “they [NES students]” verbally contribute even when their responses are seemingly unimportant. Eujin dismissed these comments, summarizing their content with “blah blah” (line 13), and then described it as a mark of another culture (line 14).

Eujin’s claim was further illustrated as she elaborated on her experience:

Excerpt 6.1.2 (Eujin, I#12, Jan 21, 2009, K-original)
24 Eujin: It’s difficult to speak up when I don’t even understand. Then I realized they were just talking to each other and not even looking at me. Oh, this is marginalization.((laughing))
28 Eujin: This is a research methods course I’m taking this term
29 M: Oh, who is the instructor?
30 Eujin: I am not taking the section offered by our department, since I have another class on Thursdays, so I took Tuesday’s instead and I am the only international student there, so they were really actively talking, [even when] I could not understand anything. ((laughing)) What the? I just thought to myself.

In the above excerpt, Eujin constructed a dichotomy of international versus local student identities when she described herself being “I” (line 22 in the previous excerpt 6.1.1), the only NNES in a small group discussion, and the only “international” student (line 33 in excerpt 6.1.2),
who, in addition, could not understand what “they” were saying (line 23 in excerpt 6.1.1) while “they were rea::lly actively talking” (line 34). Her affective stance in language socialization was indexed by several emphatic marks using voice raising and/or vowel lengthening, for instance, in lines 1-3 (in excerpt 6.1.1), when she demonstrated her expertise in language socialization in a Korean context (“if you participate actively in class like answering questions, other students hate it”); in line 20, when she noted her marginalization by saying “no, not this”; and in line 34, “they [other NES students] were rea::lly actively talking”.

As mentioned earlier, Eujin’s awareness of being marginalized became particularly salient after she had “learned about it” (line 16, in excerpt 6.1.1), which, she claimed, sensitized her to the unequal power distribution between participants in a small group discussion, where “only two [NESs] ended up talking” (line 22) and “they were just talking to each other and not even looking at me” (lines 25~26). She attributed her silence in the class to her status as the only “international” student (line 33). Her negative affective stance toward her marginalization was evidenced by frequent (feigned) laughter indexing her embarrassment when she recalled the experience of being marginalized due to her inability to understand others in discussion (lines 27 and 35).

Eujin remarked that her socialization process as an NNES in the classroom in Canada implied the existence of powerful social, institutional, and locally constructed norms to which she was expected to apprentice, but apparently did not do so successfully. However, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, the dichotomized notion of NESs versus NNESs is much contested. This is because expertise is not necessarily an inherent attribute of NESs; rather, expertise is continuously constructed and must be demonstrated to be legitimized (Duff, 2007).
Also, Eujin’s multiple identities and membership in multiple CoPs are demonstrated through her identification of herself as a graduate student in her department as opposed to “students from many other disciplines” in lines 38-39 in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 6.1.3 (Eujin, I#12, Jan 21, 2009, K-original)

37 M: Are you the only one from our department there?
38 Eujin: yes, there are students from many other
disciplines there like educational psychology.
40 So it’s interesting, since others [colleagues in
the department] are taking the course offered by
the department, [and] I feel like I should (0.3)
43 oh (0.3) I should [participate more]
...
47 Eujin: Everyone in my department is taking it really.
48 Besides a few, everyone else is taking this methods
course [that my department offers]. So I wonder,
50 should I have taken that course instead?

In this particular context, Eujin did not see herself as NNES as opposed to other NESs in the class, as she did in previous excerpts; rather, when she was with students from other departments, she constructed her identity as a legitimate member of her department. For instance, she was concerned whether she was taking the “wrong” class because “besides a few” (line 48) students in the program, “everyone else” (line 48) was enrolled in another section that her department was offering. She reported that she felt left out, and she was concerned about missing out on something that others in her cohort were experiencing. Her identification of self in this CoP (i.e., in a research methods course) demonstrated the hybrid nature of identities and how she negotiated her identities in this particular class. Again, her discourse of “everyone in my department is taking [this methods course] really... So I wonder, should I have taken that course instead” (lines 47-50) signified how she desired to join another CoP, where “everyone” in her department was a member and she could consider herself to be a member as well. In sum, these
excerpts illustrate how complex and variable language socialization processes can be (Duff, 2003; Talmy, 2008), especially with multiple and hybrid identity constructions.

Likewise, Shelley found herself with multiple and hybrid identities in different classes. In one class, she felt like a legitimate member participating in class discussions (i.e., “I can also participate,” line 2, excerpt 6.2.1 below), since other members from the same department created a friendly and comfortable atmosphere for her. Yet, in another class where most of the students were from different departments, she did not feel as legitimate and felt more like an NNES, as did Eujin. Shelley recounted this experience distinguishing between herself and other students in class by employing words like “another class” (line 4), “other students” (line 6), and “native speakers” (line 8), as opposed to “3-4 students from ‘our’ department” (lines 5-6) and only “two of us are non-natives” (lines 8-9).

Excerpt 6.2.1 (Shelley, I#7, Feb 2, 2009, E-original)
1 I feel different in different courses. In one course,
2 I can also participate... The other class’ environment
3 is very good. Everyone participates in discussion
4 (0.4) But in another class, I feel a little bit
different. We only have 3-4 [students] from our
5 department. All the other students are from different
6 departments in education. So especially most of them
7 are native speakers; only Rick\textsuperscript{35} and I, two of us are
8 non-natives. When we had group discussions among
9 students in our department, that’s okay. We’ve all
10 actually had great discussions before. But with some
11 other students, probably they would probably, they
12 knew each other before, or probably they unconsciously
13 create that kind of native [speakers’] environment
14 which is alienating [us] from them. So I feel a
15 little bit uncomfortable [there].

\textsuperscript{35} All names are pseudonyms.
This finding echoes Morita’s (2004) study, which reports that NNES students attempted to participate in class discussions by exercising their personal agency and actively negotiating their positionalities, which were locally constructed in a given classroom. For Shelley, familiarity with others in a classroom where most of the students were from the same department seemed to provide her the sense of legitimacy she needed to feel more comfortable speaking up and participating more actively in class (lines 1-4; lines 9-11); in classes without this level of familiarity, however, she was again unable to contribute (lines 4-7; lines 11-16).

6.2.3 Expert in her own right: The case of DRY

The contrasting identity constructions and language socialization processes of NNES students are demonstrated in excerpts 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 taken from an exchange involving two participants, DRY and Shelley. In the beginning of these excerpts, DRY and Shelley constructed their identities as NNESs and novices much like Eujin did in the previous discussion (in Excerpt 6.1.2). However, as the conversation continued, the way they identified themselves differed considerably. DRY, like Eujin, constructed her hybrid identities as someone who was a novice in academia, but who showed expertise in writing an academic paper. At the same time, Shelley constructed a more restrictive identity as a novice in the CoP of academic writing.

Excerpt 6.3.1 (Joint I#4, Nov 18, 2008, E-original)

01 DRY: I think I have trouble (0.4) finding (0.5)
02 references. I kinda- always have obsession for
03 references? Usually I don’t refer [to] many
04 books ’cause I don’t have enough time to read
05 lots of books; and I don’t know like- (0.3)
06 I know that people don’t (0.2) you know (0.4)
07 wholly finish the books but they kinda skim
08 at=
09 M: =yeah yeah get only what they need=
10 DRY: =what they need. But maybe I am not really
11 good at those kinda work; Eh usually when you
12 critique something, if you look at [this theory
and to make your opinions very supportive
and (0.4) you kinda follow some theories from
other scholars and then add your opinions
((laughs)) right?
M: Um hmm

In this excerpt, DRY started off by discussing the “trouble” she had with one of the activities involved in producing an academic paper (i.e., finding references (lines 1-2)). Then, she admitted to having an “obsession” with references (line 2) and “not [being] really good at” (lines 10-11) finding them. However, instead of accepting her academic identity as a novice who was not skilled in these procedures, she negotiated her identity by demonstrating her knowledge about how research is done (e.g., noting that it is common practice to skim references instead of thoroughly reading them (line 7)). Moreover, she co-constructed this knowledge with M, the interviewer and researcher, when she said, “you know” (lines 6-7) and later followed with a tag question “right?” (line 16), seeking confirmation of her expertise from another expert. The researcher confirmed DRY’s remarks with the affirmative “um hmm” (line 17). In sum, this particular segment shows DRY’s construction of hybrid identities as novice in academia, but expert in how academic papers are written although she is not successful at writing them yet.

Excerpt 6.3.2 (Joint I#4, Nov 18, 2008, E-original)

DRY: But whenever [I read the book
M: [How long is the paper?
DRY: Four I think with a-
M: ((Reading the syllabus)) Eight to ten. Eight
to ten. You know I mean I could be wrong (0.3)
but I remember [someone] saying something like
if it’s an eight to ten page paper? And then
your reference should be like one to two pages
at least.
Shelley: Really? Oh my goodness.
M: ((Continues to give advice on references))
...
But if you start accumulating, it could easily
be one to two pages. And if you have say only
three references, it makes your paper look so
Also, even after having acknowledged her shortcomings in her academic writing, which resulted in a “low score” (line 48), in part due to not having an adequate number of sources, DRY attributed those results to not having “enough time” (line 4 in Excerpt 6.3.1 and lines 62-63 in Excerpt 6.3.2) rather than to other issues such as her being a novice, an NNES, or not being able to find more than two or three sources (line 47). In other words, by implying that, had she had ample time, she could have done a better job, she contested her novice identity, rather than reproducing or negotiating it. However, as inadequate time management could be considered a characteristic of a novice writer, DRY was rather unsuccessfully resisting her novice identity.

On the other hand, Shelley, one of the most competent and strongest incoming NNES students, according to other NNES participants, remained a novice in this particular language socialization instance, taking a rather receptive position instead of questioning or co-constructively making meaning of a particular practice. She expressed surprise and concern upon hearing from the researcher (“expert”) that she needed to present a significant number of references for her paper: “Really? Oh my goodness” (line 27 in Excerpt 6.3.2). In addition, she
did not fully participate in the other language socialization activity of discussing the correlation between the number of references and the marks received (lines 51-59), perhaps because she did not understand the discussion or did not hear the previous segment of exchanges between M and DRY clearly. Shelley’s confusion is evident when she remarked, “I thought you got [a] good score” (line 56).

Also, in this excerpt, DRY, Shelley, and researcher M co-constructed a set of guidelines for searching for and cite sources for an academic paper. In other words, breaking the pattern of question-answer adjacency pairs, M, as an expert, initiated a topic shift by interrupting a previous statement (line 21) to provide a specific piece of information: “if [your paper] is an eight to ten page paper, and then your reference should be like one to two pages at least” (lines 24-26). M also showed empathy and encouraged the participants: “But if you start accumulating, it could easily be one to two pages” (lines 43-44). DRY validated M’s suggestions by responding, “I only have one to two references and that’s why I get the low score ((laughs))” (lines 47-48). M’s agreement is demonstrated by the lengthening of the vowel and the falling intonation in line 50: “yea::h↓.”

In sum, in these excerpts, both identities, the strong academic expert and the novice NNES identity, were present in DRY’s language socialization instances. Differing from DRY, Shelley constructed a relatively strong NNES identity as a novice in a new language socialization environment, both linguistically and academically. Regardless of how DRY and Shelley were objectively perceived by others, their self-positioning placed them at different levels of competence. Although they were both NNESs and newcomers to the program, their identity
constructions showed considerable variations, perhaps led by prior knowledge or current needs, confirming that NNES is not defined based on who one is but on what one does.

6.3 Negotiation of multiple/hybrid identities

6.3.1 Investing in a student identity versus maintaining a teacher identity

Before I started collecting data for this study, I anticipated that my potential participants, who were formerly teachers in EFL contexts but currently were graduate students in an ESL context, would find it especially challenging to adjust to a new and different academic setting. This idea was based on my belief and observation that, as former teachers and experts in EFL contexts, they have established their own ideas on how English is taught (or should be taught). Consequently, due to their needs as EFL teachers, the participants would possibly have some questions and resistance to what they would be learning in an ESL context.

However, as soon as I embarked on this research, I had to reconsider my hypothesis, since none of my participants claimed that they found their socialization into academia challenging due to the change of their status from teacher to graduate student. Rather, they identified their stark realization of their non-native status, and the constant negotiation and shaping thereof, as one of the most challenging parts of their adjustment. In fact, it was their student identity that was often highlighted. Shelley, who had a number of years of teaching experience, remarked, “I was told I would be studying new developments in the field, and I was ready to start to learn” (Pre-study questionnaire, Sept 2008, E-original). Eujin agreed with Shelley, saying, “I have given up my job for the time being to become a student again. So I am ready to learn what I can from professors here” (Eujin, I#2, Oct 3, 2008, K-original). In other
words, because they recognized the expertise of the professors and instructors at NWU, they did not feel much frustration adjusting to their student status.

However, this was not the case for DRY, for a different reason. DRY reported that she had difficulty managing her time because she was juggling multiple roles, including that of student and part-time reporter, among others (see Participant profile, 5.1.1.1 in Chapter 5), which seriously conflicted with her graduate study. Although she claimed she tried to invest more time and effort in her studies, she often had to compromise: “taking four courses while working part time is difficult since I cannot invest much time” (DRY, Journal, Jan 27, 2009, K-original). As a self-identified perfectionist and a former English teacher, it greatly bothered her when she did not perform well. She lamented,

_I cannot study for more than two to three hours a day due to my crazy schedule... I cannot help but think, what my priority is, and how all this would lead to my future... I know that my study is priority, but I cannot give up my part-time job at the moment._

(DRY, Email, Feb 23, 2009, K-original)

It was particularly frustrating for DRY, who, like a participant in Park’s (2006) study, felt greatly privileged to have the opportunity to study in a TESOL graduate program and wanted to accomplish as much as she could, including writing a thesis (if admitted to the M.A. program).

Nevertheless, all my participants voiced that they were investing considerable time and effort in their graduate studies, after having sacrificed a former job in hopes of gaining advanced knowledge and insight that would be beneficial upon their return to teaching. To them, the various socialization challenges they were experiencing in the new context were part of the learning process (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original), and their former teacher identity did not collide with their new graduate student identity.
6.3.2 Claiming the insider knowledge of EFL contexts

The participants’ experiences of socialization into academic communities in the Canadian post-secondary context encompassed not only the current involvement and apprenticeship into various academic CoPs, but also their knowledge about EFL contexts as L2 learners and teachers. As socialization processes are often complex and reciprocal (Duff, 2010), the participants not only learned from experts in ESL CoPs, but they also passed on their knowledge about EFL contexts to others. Indeed, it was in discussions of EFL contexts, mainly Korea and China, where my participants claimed such insider knowledge. Also, when confronted with the seemingly conflicting views of others, especially of NES peers, some reacted strongly.

For instance, in one of the joint interviews, Eujin, DRY, and Shelley recalled and discussed an instance in which they disagreed with the NES researcher’s interpretation of a term that participants in the study had used to describe themselves. In the study, participants referred to themselves as “travelers,” which the NES researcher understood in the sense of “tourist” or one who is leisurely taking a trip. To Eujin, DRY, and Shelley, however, these two words clearly represent two different meanings. They agreed that they would interpret the two words differently, as they believed the NNES participants of the study had used the word “traveler” to mean someone who is temporarily staying in a place, as opposed to a resident who has a more permanent living arrangement. Eujin, DRY, and Shelley argued that the researcher, as an NES with an etic perspective on the group she was researching, could have possibly misinterpreted an NNES’s word choice. Eujin explained:

I think an emic perspective provides a different view. When participants of this study said they are here [English speaking country] as travelers, I would interpret it differently... [and] not as the NES researcher did. To me, traveler and tourist are not the same - Tourist means someone who has resources to enjoy whereas traveler means someone
who has to travel despite his or her own wishes. That’s my understanding of the two words. But the researcher interpreted it more in a sense of tourist rather than that of traveler... I don’t think immigrant women in the study made such distinctions either; rather, they must have thought themselves as travelers, someone who is just going through the place, and not completely rooted in the society.

(Joint I#8, Apr 28, 2009, K-original)

In other words, some NNES participants provided a critical perspective on the interpretation in the study when they believed that they, as L2 learners and NNESs, possessed insights obtained from their EFL experiences and as L2 learners, and that they could contribute to research involving EFL contexts by providing alternative interpretations for some NNES discourses.

Also, in one of the class observations where all five participants were present36 (Graduate TESL 4, Table 5.1 in Chapter 5), most of my participants were observing their classmates rather quietly, as presentations by others were taking place at the time. However, when one of the NES students who had lived in Korea for many years provided inaccurate information on a particular Korean celebrity in the class discussion that followed, both DRY and Eujin immediately corrected him and contributed to the discussion by providing knowledge of Korean popular culture (Class observation#2, Term 2, 2009). They later asserted that they felt obliged, and empowered at the same time, to correct him, as he seemed to demonstrate inadequate understanding of an EFL context (Joint I#8, Apr 28, 2009, K-original). In other words, the participants demonstrated a proactive attitude toward a topic in an EFL context, to which they found it necessary to contribute.

More importantly, despite the challenges NES students confront in academic socialization (as discussed earlier in 6.1.1.1), my participants thought that their NES counterparts

36 STRUGGLE was auditing the course.
were not facing as many difficulties and claimed that NESs and NNESs did not begin their socialization as graduate students on equal footing. They asserted that NNESs tended to face extra layers of challenges, particularly pertaining to their use of L2 in academic writing. Such linguistic challenges were repeatedly noted by the master’s program participants (DRY, Eujin, and Shelley) as the most compelling and immediate threat to their positioning as graduate students (Joint I#4, Nov 18, 2008, E-original). They also noted that their NES counterparts might not truly grasp the kind of difficulties that NNESs go through in terms of their L2 use. Therefore, when topics related to EFL contexts or L2 learners were discussed, the participants found it particularly empowering to contribute to discussions with their knowledge and experiences of EFL contexts and L2 learners like themselves or their former students. These findings align with those in Lin’s study (2011) in which the participants came to see themselves as multilingual and multicompetent NNESs with legitimate knowledge to contribute, rather than incompetent L2 language speakers. At the same time, the participants also expressed frustration that some of their NES colleagues might not be able to truly comprehend L2 learners’ challenges and, therefore, might not be able to provide helpful or constructive assistance to L2 learners, particularly in EFL contexts.

In particular, ME voiced this concern, saying, “do they (NES) really know about our difficulties, that’s another issue.” She recalled a moment in a class discussion in which another NES colleague did not seem to grasp the amount or the degree of difficulty some NNESs experience in learning English in an EFL context. ME pointed out the status and the importance of English as a world language in her home country (a core subject in a high stakes test such as a college entrance exam), which places a huge burden on L2 learners. According to ME, it is hard for NESs to understand the challenge because they do not share the NNESs’ experiences (ME,
Eujin and STRUGGLE also commented that learning a foreign language such as Chinese, which some of her NES colleagues studied, is not comparable to learning English in an EFL context. The former is often triggered by intrinsic motivation (based on one’s own choice or sense of achievement) while the latter is a compulsory, high stakes task driven mostly by instrumental motivation (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original).

In short, by strongly claiming ownership of knowledge and experience of L2 learning in EFL contexts, the NNES participants believed they could contribute to providing more accurate accounts of L2 learning or even alternative interpretations of data in already published research.

6.4 Summary

In this chapter, I looked at how NNES graduate students in a TESOL program constructed, shifted, and negotiated their identities through discourse during their language socialization processes. As demonstrated in several excerpts of the interview data, language socialization is a contingent, precarious process wherein ascribed or fixed identities are often contested (Duff, 2008b, 2010). Identity construction was often accomplished through interactional routines, and the dichotomized construction of identity such as novice/expert or NESs/NNESs was questioned in various individual language socialization instances. In other words, no participant remained a novice or expert in any particular CoP as their status as novice or expert was negotiated as they moved between CoPs or even in any given CoP.

The next chapter will discuss writing, focusing mainly on the participants’ perception on their progress in academic writing, which participants found to be especially daunting during their first year as graduate students. Emphasis, however, will be on how NNESs perceive
themselves as writer before and after their first year at NWU as they socialized into becoming academic writers, adhering to local cultures, and following the conventions of academic writing.
Chapter 7

BECOMING AN ACADEMIC WRITER AS SOCIALIZATION PRACTICE

In this chapter, I highlight the findings that answer the third research question: How do NNES graduate students perceive their writing development through their socialization experiences in academic writing? In other words, I investigate how NNES graduate students become academic writers by being socialized into practices of producing academic writing. I will report findings about the participants’ views on their progress in L2 writing, their reception and interpretation of professors’ feedback on their writing, and their positioning of themselves as graduate students producing academic writing. Perhaps one of the most notable findings is that, despite the expertise and high degree of competency these participants had as professionals in English at home, their linguistic proficiency and stylistic variability often deviated from the expectations of many instructors, and they diligently sought help to improve their writing.

I will first present findings drawn from the pre-study questionnaire and interviews, followed by the post-study questionnaire and interview findings for each participant. Particular attention will be paid to how the participants’ perceptions of their writing shifted overtime through their socialization. I then list some of the first academic writing challenges they identified. Finally, the newly established peer writing program that was designed to help improve their writing, a significant language socialization process that the participants were engaged in, will be detailed along with implications of the uncertainties in the socialization processes.
7.1 Participants’ self-assessment of their writing: Before and after the study

When I met the participants for pre-study questionnaire/interviews in September 2008, I asked them to assess their own writing skills in English for two reasons. First of all, writing is not an autonomous but a situated act (Canagarajah, 2006) that requires recurrent socialization. By assessing their own writing processes, the participants could become more aware of their own prior language socialization in academic literacies and writing. Second, by investigating learners’ beliefs regarding their writing before and after their language socialization in the first year of their graduate studies, we could see how “learners’ dynamic self-beliefs” might have influenced “their sense of agency, motivation, willingness to engage in activities” (Mercer, 2011, p. 1).

The questionnaire (see Appendices F Pre-study questionnaire and H Post-study questionnaire) asked the participants to assess specific writing tasks (divided into informal and formal/academic tasks) that participants were likely to complete during their stay at NWU. These questions were intended to investigate how the participants saw themselves as writers and their writing skills in English, and how and in what ways their perception might have influenced their writing development over time. I was particularly interested in identifying how their socialization experiences in academic writing in their first year of graduate studies might have changed their self-assessment of their academic writing skills.

The participants assessed their confidence and ability in writing for individual tasks on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "weak", 3 "fair", and 5 "strong", and later interviewed to elaborate on their assessment. Despite their varied assessment of their writing ranging initially from “fair to strong” in pre-study questionnaire, most participants noted some form of improvement in both their formal/academic and informal writing in the post-questionnaire. This finding is similar to
Sasaki’s (2007) study, which reports improvement in L2 writing ability, fluency, and motivation to write in a group of undergraduate study-abroad students after a year abroad. Although this study and Sasaki's study have different participant groups (undergraduate and graduate), both studies support the (positive) impact of ESL experiences. However, the areas of improvement the focal participants of my study identified differed considerably. While some of them saw improvements in their writing per se, others considered their newly acquired understanding of the requirements and strategies used in academic writing as well as deeper and broader knowledge of the subject (content) matter to be the primary causes of their advancement.

One interesting and predictable finding was that, despite variations in different aspects of formal/academic writing, all the participants identified that they were not comfortable writing a research proposal, a type of writing unfamiliar to most of them. For instance, two M.Ed. students who had not written a research proposal before noted they were not confident at all while Shelley and two doctoral students who were better versed in research evaluated themselves as "fair" in research proposal writing in the pre-study questionnaire. In the post-study questionnaire (see Appendix H), I added one more item asking about their ability to conduct empirical research for publication including conducting research, writing up findings, submitting the paper to publishers and negotiating the publication process: that is, another CoP advanced doctoral (and master's) students participating in this processes were engaging. To this question, most of the participants responded negatively. Such findings illustrate that regardless of the different degrees of confidence in writing, each kind of writing incidence (or CoP) poses varying degrees of challenge, as it needs to be contextualized, situated and socialized into.

Another notable finding was the seemingly uniform definition of good academic writing provided by the participants. Although the participants were aware that sentence-level accuracy
alone does not constitute good writing (and that good writing also requires critical analysis and other aspects), they claimed that sentence-level accuracy made their papers “readable” (i.e., comprehensible and fluent). As noted by Chang and Kanno (2010), competent graduate students whose theses will likely be publicly examined and archived, and particularly those who specialize in English education, should produce writing without major grammatical and lexical mistakes in order to meet the expectations and regulations of higher education at an English-medium university.

In what follows, each participant’s self-assessment and the rationale for their evaluations are explained. By investigating the reasons behind their assessments, I attempt to identify how the language socialization processes they experienced in their first year of graduate studies have influenced their assessment of their writing in English.

7.1.1 STRUGGLE

7.1.1.1 Pre-study: “I just write when I need to.”

In the beginning of the study, STRUGGLE, a first year doctoral student, expressed seemingly contrasting views on her English writing. For instance, when asked whether she felt confident as a writer in English, she gave herself only 4 out of 10 possible points with 1 being a weak writer to 10 being an excellent writer (see Appendix F).

However, when she was asked to rate her writing skills on individual writing tasks on a scale of 1 (weak) to 5 (strong) in informal writing (a total of eight tasks) and in formal/academic writing (a total of seven tasks) on the pre-study questionnaire (see Table 7.1), STRUGGLE assessed her writing skills to be equally strong in both informal and formal/academic writing
For instance, when totaling her responses to the questions, out of five possible points for each of the eight questions about informal writing tasks and seven questions about formal/academic writing tasks, her informal writing tasks have 37 points out of 40 possible points (4.6/5 when averaging) and formal/academic writing tasks have 30 points out of 35 possible points (an average of 4.3/5).

Table 7.1 STRUGGLE’s self-assessment of her writing skills in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Informal Writing Tasks (8 tasks)</th>
<th>Pre-study</th>
<th>Post-study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Write a brief note of reminders for a weekend trip</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Write a one or two sentence “thank you” note for a gift a friend sent to me</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Write a brief email to a classmate explaining why I will not be able to attend the class today</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Write a postcard to a friend describing what I have been doing on my vacation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Write clear directions on how to get to my place</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Write a short note to a friend describing how to find websites of his/her interest on internet</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Write a complaint to a store manager about my dissatisfaction with an appliance I recently purchased</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Write an email to my department secretary explaining I need a room for study meetings on certain days</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total points</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal Writing Tasks</td>
<td>37/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal/ Academic Writing Tasks (7 tasks in pre-study and 8 tasks in post-study)</td>
<td>18/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Formal/ Academic Writing Tasks (7 tasks in pre-study and 8 tasks in post-study)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fill out an online application form for an online course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Write a formal letter to future graduate students from my home university describing various aspects of NWU and the city where it is located</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Write a cover letter introducing myself and describing my qualifications for a teaching job application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Write an email to my professor describing the progress being made on a current project or assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Write a summary of the main points of a talk (seminar) I recently attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Write a 10-page paper on second language learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Write a research proposal as a term paper for a research methodology course at NWU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>(Post-study only) Write an empirical research paper for a possible publication in an academic journal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total points</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal/ Academic Writing Tasks</td>
<td>30/35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: On a scale of 1 (weak) to 5 (strong) for each task</td>
<td>28/40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In her informal writing, STRUGGLE claimed to be “a hybrid person,” that is, “neither Korean nor American,” but someone with qualities of both. With this positioning of herself, STRUGGLE explained that she takes an active role in writing, meaning that she writes extensively, often in both English and her first language.

In contrast, despite the fact that she mostly gave 4 to 5 points (except 3 points to "writing a research proposal") to her writing skills in individual tasks in formal/academic writing, STRUGGLE claimed she does not consider herself as a good writer in English, giving herself 4 out of 10 as mentioned earlier. Such discrepancies in her assessment of her writing were noticeable throughout the pre-questionnaire interview. One possible speculation based on her comment is that she was not taking a proactive role in academic writing unlike what she claimed to have done with her informal writing. She commented, “I just write when I need to. There is no levels of confidence. I just write when I’m told to do” (STRUGGLE, Pre-study questionnaire, Sept 19, 2008, E-original; errors in original).

Also, STRUGGLE’s assessment of herself as an English writer seemed to have largely derived from others’ evaluation of her writing especially when she questioned the definition of “good” writing in the pre-study interview: “What do you mean by good writing? Do you mean the grade I got or how confident I felt about my writing?” Likewise, despite having assessed her writing skills in individual tasks in formal/academic writing highly, STRUGGLE still saw some room for improvement in her writing at the sentence-level. Moreover, in her written responses to the pre-study questionnaire and also in some of her early papers in her courses, some editing issues were evident. For instance, when asked whether she finds informal writing in English to be easier or more difficult than formal/academic writing, she responded:
My most of writing is from academic writing. I don't know what is informal writing. Informal to who?? There is no one that I can be informal when it comes to write in English... But I facebook with my friends, very often. 

(STRUGGLE, Pre-study questionnaire, Sept 19, 2008, E-original; errors in original)

Her former advisor from the master’s program had also recommended that she work on “her language,” which STRUGGLE interpreted as “her grammar” (STRUGGLE, #1, Sept 19, 2008, E-original). She had been consistently challenged by instructors to strengthen her academic writing. For instance, on one of her paper assignments in her courses at NWU, the professor noted that although her “writing was content-rich, it needed to be more formal and to follow academic standards” (Instructor’s comments on STRUGGLE’s final paper in Doctoral Seminar 1, Dec 2008). Other professors also repeatedly commented on her sentence-level grammar and the structure of her paper, rather than the content. The following comments are typical of the feedback she received:

- Be careful with noun-verb agreement
- Be careful with wording
- Not sure what you mean by this phrase
- Difficult to follow your argument due to some organizational problems. You also needed to pay more careful attention to final editing and referencing style.

(Instructor’s comments on STRUGGLE’s final paper in Graduate Literacy 1, Dec 2008)

Such feedback somewhat weakened her confidence in her English writing skills, although it also increased her awareness of her need to improve. Toward the end of the first term, STRUGGLE’s sense of confidence was further weakened upon realizing that, as a doctoral student, she needed to produce publishable research (discussed in Chapter 3: e.g., Cheung, 2010), another challenge of language socialization in graduate school.
7.1.1.2 Post-study: “I need academic writing to get to where I want to be.”

In the post-study questionnaire and interview, when asked how she would rate herself as a holistic "academic" English writer, STRUGGLE gave herself 8 out of 10, which doubled her previous rating (4 out of 10 in the pre-study questionnaire) of herself as an English writer. She claimed that after having read relevant literature extensively and produced a number of papers for her classes, she felt more empowered as an academic writer. Some of the feedback from her instructors also support her claim: "You have done a very good job pulling together your theoretical framework and explaining the different aspects of it as it frames your research questions” (Instructor’s comments on STRUGGLE’s final paper in Doctoral Seminar 1, Dec 2008).

At the same time, however, when asked to reassess her skill in individual writing tasks, STRUGGLE rated her writing skills in both informal and formal/academic writing tasks as considerably lower than before the study because, she reasoned, she came to realize her "shortcomings" once she embarked on her study including sentence-level issues she continued to have in her writing. For example, the following excerpt from one of the final term papers she wrote consists of a number of sentence-level errors.

(Misspelled the name of the researcher) argues that language in use are different (a subject and verb agreement error/word choice; changed to "differs" by the instructor) based on different ways of knowing, (a comma splice error) different ways of making sense of the human experience, (a punctuation error; changed to ":") in other words, different social epistemologies. Therefore, literacy events are one's (changed to "the") expression of the knowledge, values, and behaviors of a social group.... Due to the different ways of forming and using the language and text across community (a plural error; changed to "communities”), students may be required to adapt their language rules and forms. Sometimes, school language and literacy patterns can contradict their (an ambiguous pronoun; changed to "students'”) home language and literacy patterns.
As she "struggled" through issues with her sentence-level writing, STRUGGLE pointed out that academic writing was becoming increasingly important in her professional life. When asked how confident she was writing English academic papers after studying at NWU, she noted:

*I began to understand more about various conventions within academic writing and became more aware of my professional identity and my audience. It was through various rejections of my written applications and papers, self-reflection on my writings, and guidance from my supervisor.*

(STRUGGLE, Post-study interview, July 2009, K-original)

Moreover, publishing became her biggest concern with her writing, as it would have “a direct impact on [her] professional trajectory." This is a concern also shared by some renowned scholars like Canagarajah (2001), Kubota (2001), and Sasaki (2001) in their graduate years as discussed earlier in Chapter 3. As Kubota (2001) and Sasaki (2001) specifically mentioned, STRUGGLE also believed that publication would allow her access to the world of research and the ability to reach a wider audience. Moreover, she confided that her lack of publications not only hindered her success when applying for scholarships, but also clouded her future as a competent scholar compared to colleagues who had publications. Writing for publication posed an even bigger challenge because it was “a separate genre within academic writing and was new to [her]” (STRUGGLE, Post-study interview, July 2009, K-original). As Cheung (2010) noted, one needs to acquire strategies when writing and submitting a paper to a journal. After learning that some doctoral students in the program already had publications before joining the program, STRUGGLE reported feeling anxious and having the impression that the institution seemed to prefer a ready-made scholar (someone with publications) over “a potential scholar like [her] who
could grow while in the graduate program” (STRUGGLE, Post-study interview, July 2009, K-original). Although she was given assistance, mostly from her instructors, it was mainly on her sentence-level writing, as it seemed to be more of a concern at that time. For instance, STRUGGLE’s advisor offered to work with her to help her produce suitable academic writing: “Now, you and I will work on transforming your content-rich writing into good, formal, academic English writing” (Instructor’s comments on STRUGGLE’s final paper in Doctoral Seminar 1, Dec 2008).

Still, STRUGGLE asserted that there needed to be more systematic support at the program level that would help NNES students like her in academic writing. As a matter of fact, the program did offer such assistance in the form of peer writing tutors in the first year of STRUGGLE’s study. More about this support will be discussed later in this chapter (7.2.2).

7.1.2 ME

7.1.2.1 Pre-study: “Compared to NESs’, my writing is not very strong.”

Like STRUGGLE, ME, another doctoral student, showed discrepancies in her ratings of herself as a writer in a holistic sense, and her writing skills in individual tasks. For instance, ME also did not think of herself as a strong writer in English (4 out of 10) in the pre-study questionnaire, but positively assessed her English skills in individual writing tasks by rating her informal writing skills a 10 out of 10. She showed some hesitation toward her formal/academic writing (4.3/5 when averaging), noting the lowest confidence (3 out of 5) in writing a research proposal, a type of writing she was still apprenticing into.
Table 7.2 ME’s self-assessment of her writing skills in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Informal Writing Tasks (8 tasks)</th>
<th>Pre-study</th>
<th>Post-study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Write a postcard to a friend describing what I have been doing on my vacation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Write a complaint to a store manager about my dissatisfaction with an appliance I recently purchased</td>
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<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Formal/Academic Writing Tasks (7 tasks in pre-study and 8 tasks in post-study)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Fill out an online application form for an online course</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Write a formal letter to future graduate students from my home university describing various aspects of NWU and the city where it is located</td>
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<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>(Post-study only) Write an empirical research paper for a possible publication in an academic journal</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>37/40 4.6/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total points Average | 40/40 5/5 | 40/40 5/5 |

Note: On a scale of 1 (weak) to 5 (strong) for each task

Interestingly, though, ME asserted that she was more comfortable with formal/academic writing than informal writing, as most of her writing in English was academic, unlike most of the participants who rated their informal writing higher than their academic writing and despite the fact that ME has given 10 out of 10 for her own skills in informal writing tasks. In fact, she claimed she often used an academic voice in her informal writing, which often made it sound
“too serious.” Despite her high self-assessment of her academic writing, however, she commented that she was “not so confident when compared with native classmates” (ME, Pre-study questionnaire, Sept 2008, E-original). This awareness was an overriding theme throughout her first term as a graduate student; she often noted that she lacked certain “native-like” qualities such as critical thinking, analyzing skills, and sophisticated lexis (see 5.2.5 in Chapter 5 for more discussion on this topic).

7.1.2.2 Post-study: “I just need more time and to plan ahead to write well.”

In the post-study questionnaire and interview, ME rated herself a 7 out of 10 as an English writer, showing considerably more confidence herself as an English writer, especially as an academic writer, compared to her previous assessment of 4 out of 10. ME reported that she gained more confidence about her writing as she invested more time and effort to planning and writing her papers than she did in the beginning of her studies at NWU:

If I got enough time to organize my papers, usually the result (scores or self-satisfaction) is good... in the very first year, I didn’t really plan ahead to write the papers, so that I just spent one month or so to think about the topic and then write, just as other people in the class do. However, the result is not so good, and my spelling is corrected everywhere and the ideas are critiqued (by professors) everywhere too... however, now, I try to plan ahead. I try to have the topic in the beginning of the semester and then leave about 2 months to write the paper up.

(ME, Post-study questionnaire/interview, July 2009, E-original; errors in original)

She further asserted that she was apprenticed into the CoP of writing academic papers by one of her more skilled ("oldtimer") classmates who shared her strategies of planning her papers well in advance. ME noted: "Then I think, even a native speaker should do like that, I should also really give it a try. So I try and I am happy with this strategy". One of ME's instructors also helped her feel a more legitimate member of her CoP by encouraging her to write a draft for her final paper
at least a month before the actual deadline, and then by giving feedback and commenting on the
draft. ME reported such guidance and this drafting and feedback process considerably increased
her confidence in writing and the ideas she expressed in her papers. She argued:

[Her instructor] could give comments on the drafts so that we will have clearer idea and
direction what to write about. I think this really help me to write up the paper. I think it's
about confidence, right? If I feel confident about my own ideas and logics, then I will be
more comfortable to write everything I am thinking, instead hiding things that I am afraid
of being judged.

(ME, Post-study questionnaire, July 2009, E-original; errors in original)

In fact, after employing this strategy, she said her papers were less “non-native like.” ME also
believed that the improvement of her writing was also related to the increased breadth and depth
of her knowledge in the field, a result of reading extensively, taking courses, and attending
workshops and conferences (i.e., her cumulative experiences in academic discourse
socialization). She further noted:

I didn’t really know how to develop my own opinions before, so I had really hard time at
first to put my own voice in the academic papers... But it’s getting better. As time passed,
and I read more, I think am developing my own voices and opinions for certain
perspectives.

(ME, Post-study questionnaire, July 2009, E-original; errors in original)

More importantly, ME talked about a study group, which considerably helped her as a
writer. It was formed by a group of classmates who were taking the same course. There,
members “supported each other by reading each other’s drafts and giving comments.” She noted
that not only getting feedback from her peers but also reading someone else’s paper and giving
feedback helped to strengthen her writing (ME, I#5, Nov 13, 2008, E-original). This is consistent
with the finding of Mahrer et al. (2008) that reflections in the form of giving feedback on other’s writing also improve one’s own writing.

In sum, to ME, being a good academic writer largely meant "being like a native speaker" who was (mistakenly) viewed as having more expertise in writing academic papers. However, as she apprenticed into writing academic papers, and as she socialized into her studies at NWU, she gained more confidence in herself as a writer with legitimate "ideas and opinions".

7.1.3 Eujin

7.1.3.1 Pre-study: “What exactly is academic writing?”

Compared to other participants, Eujin was stricter in terms of assessing herself as a writer in English, giving herself only 3 out of 10 possible points in the pre-study questionnaire (Sept 2008, E/K-origin). Also, although she saw some improvements in her writing as she apprenticed into academic writing in her graduate studies, she still saw herself as a weak academic writer in English even at the end of her first year.

Eujin was particularly harsh in her self-assessment of her academic writing skills in individual tasks as illustrated in Table 7.3. She had little confidence (1.6/5 when averaging) in being able to accomplish the tasks effectively and noted that “academic [writing] is very hard” (Eujin, Pre-study interview, Sept 2008, K-origin). She mostly gave herself ratings of 1 to 2 (out of 5) with the exception of question 1 (filling an application), which does not require much writing per se. She reported that she had only a vague idea of what constituted academic writing in the beginning of her study, including the APA citation style, which was a major stumbling block during the first term.
Table 7.3 Eujin's self-assessment of her writing skills in English

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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total points</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total points</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-study</td>
<td>29/40</td>
<td>37/40</td>
<td>4.6/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<th>Total points</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-study</td>
<td>11/35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.6/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On a scale of 1 (weak) to 5 (strong) for each task

Also, as mentioned earlier, she gave herself only a 3 out of 10 as a writer in English. She repeatedly noted that she “must learn APA” in order to write academically, while lamenting that she lacked a sophisticated lexis and that her writing “was not good enough for writing essays.”

After only a few weeks into the first term, she noted that “[she] expected it would be hard to study in Canada, but [she] didn’t know it would be this hard” (Eujin, Pre-study)
questionnaire/interview, Sept 2008, E/K-original). In other words, she knew she would face challenges in writing, as she did not "learn to write in English" in an EFL context. In Eujin’s experience, English learning and teaching were mostly focused on receptive knowledge such as reading comprehension or translation (Butler, 2004; M. Kim, 2008). Consequently, at the beginning of her studies at NWU, the expectations and the linguistic, academic, and cultural challenges seemed overwhelming (see 5.1.1.2 in Chapter 5 for her socialization into graduate studies). In an attempt to improve her writing, she tried various measures, including seeking help from the writing center on campus. Unfortunately, she did not find it to be helpful due to a number of reasons that largely stemmed from her prior experiences and cultural expectations (more to be discussed in section 7.2.2).

7.1.3.2 Post-study: “Correct grammar is only the beginning.”

In the post-study interview in July 2009, Eujin assessed her writing as having improved, especially her academic writing (see Table 7.3). In fact, once she socialized into learning more about the conventions and the kinds of academic writing she needed to produce (for instance, book reviews) by taking courses, talking to peers, reflecting on feedback, and practicing through trial and error, she felt comfortable enough to produce an adequate piece of academic writing. Eujin further noted that she felt that she had more agency as a writer, though she would still use a proofreader at the end to ensure the quality of her writing.

However, once she started writing her M.A. thesis, she lost her confidence again, as this was yet another kind of academic writing and another CoP she had to join. After much contemplation, she noted that perhaps this realization of the gaps between her ability and the requirements of various genres in academic writing came after she gained knowledge about “what exactly constitutes academic writing” (Eujin, Post-study interview, July 2009, K-original).
This realization was also the reason she gave herself a 3 out of 10 as an academic writer at the end of the study, the same score she gave to herself at the beginning of the study. Whereas the first rating came from her lack of confidence in her writing in English, the later rating was a result of her realization of what academic writing in her discipline entailed. She later asserted that, had she not written a thesis, she would have rated herself 5 out of 10, an average English writer. She recalled that in the beginning of the study, she thought she would successfully produce academic writing once she “got better” at English, especially after receiving copious corrections to her use of prepositions and articles in her papers. However, at the end of the first term, she was reminded that the accurate use of writing mechanics is only “the beginning” (i.e., a basic component of an academic paper) (Li, 2007).

In sum, although Eujin’s assessment of her formal/academic writing skills in individual tasks improved somewhat (from 1.6/5 to 3.1/5), she still saw herself not as a strong writer in English especially having learned demands in academic writing in her discipline. Also, although Eujin realized that sentence-level accuracy may be only a prerequisite for strong academic writing, she still identified it as the biggest hurdle “blocking” her from becoming a member of the academic community.

7.1.4 DRY

7.1.4.1 Pre-study: “Academic writing is a whole different story.”

In the beginning of the study, DRY evaluated herself as an average writer giving herself 5 out of 10. On the contrary, she rated her writing as near-perfect for individual tasks in informal writing (4.9/5 on average), and her academic writing as rather weak (3.3/5 when averaging). Table 7.4 summarizes her self-assessment.
Writing in general had not been a daunting task for DRY, as she had a part-time job as a reporter for a local ethnic cable TV station (as mentioned in 5.1.1.1 in Chapter 5) where her duty included writing lengthy scripts and reports in Korean and, occasionally, in English. She also noted that informal writing had not been much of a concern for her, since it was similar to everyday conversations, which she was comfortable with after having lived long term in Canada.

However, she found academic writing (in English) quite challenging, and rated her academic writing skills as low, especially in the unfamiliar kinds of writing such as writing a 10-page paper on second language learning (question 6 in formal/academic writing) or writing a research proposal for a research methodology course (question 7). She noted that, “I am not good at doing academic writing because I have not written [any] papers in English,” a point that resonates with her earlier comment and also with the finding in Li’s study (2007) that graduate students need to apprentice into academic writing.

Not only academic writing was "new", but also the field of language and literacy education was new to her as well. Consequently, Dry admitted to having had many challenges related to language as well as content. She claimed that she spent at least “twice as much time as other Canadian peers to get [her] reading and papers done.” DRY’s comment is similar to the claim made by one of the participants in Chang and Kanno’s study (2010) that it often took considerably more time for NNESs in their study to do the same amount of reading and writing as NESs, mostly due to linguistic challenges.
Table 7.4 DRY’s self-assessment of her writing skills in English

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total points Average</strong></td>
<td>23/35</td>
<td>24/40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3/5</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On a scale of 1 (weak) to 5 (strong) for each task

One interesting observation in her answers to the pre-study questionnaire was her concern about the lack of sophisticated lexis and structure in her academic writing along with the Modern Language Association (MLA) style of writing. The conventional referencing system in her discipline is APA, not MLA. Her concern, however, demonstrates her awareness that
academic disciplines follow citation styles, compared with Eujin who had “no idea” of what APA was (Eujin, Pre-study questionnaire/interview, Sept 2008, E/K-original).

7.1.4.2 Post-study: “The more awareness of the conventions, the higher the expectations.”

In her post-study questionnaire, DRY reported that although she still did not feel confident in academic writing in English, she learned a lot by “doing,” that is, producing a number of papers throughout the academic year (DRY, Post-study questionnaire/interview, July 2009, E/K-original). However, her self-assessment of both informal and academic writing, as well as her evaluation of herself as a writer, was lower than that at the beginning of the study as she gave herself 4 out of 10 compared to 5/10 in the pre-study.

She explained that perhaps “being more aware of academic conventions has brought a higher expectation [of my writing],”37 a point also made earlier by Eujin, coupled with "official assessment from professors [that] might [have] influence[d] negatively on constructing [her] identity as a writer." Interestingly, DRY also questioned the definition of academic writing, noting that although she “[had] a general idea [of what academic writing was] the standard seems to vary across courses and genres.” (DRY, Post-study questionnaire/interview, July 2009, E/K-original). As noted earlier, she began to realize that academic writing is situated and localized. DRY’s experience illustrates that language socialization in academic literacy means being apprenticed into different communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), sometimes at a macro level like being a graduate student at NWU and other times at a micro level such as writing an individual paper for a course.

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37 As mentioned earlier, non-English quotes that have been translated are italicized.
7.1.5 Shelley

7.1.5.1 Pre-study: “Plagiarism is a big concern.”

In the pre-study, Shelley rated herself as a writer at 7 out of 10, the highest rating given in that category by any of the participants. Shelley had also rated both her informal and academic writing relatively high, at average of 4.8/5 and 4.3/5 respectively. She attributed such high ratings to the fact that she was in an M.A. program in her home country (and currently a visiting/exchange student in Canada) and had more academic experience than some other master’s program participants (Shelley, Pre-study questionnaire/interview, Sept 2008, E-original).

However, similar to other participants, she showed the lowest confidence (3 out of 5) in writing a research proposal, as it was a new type of writing for her. Shelley noted “a lack of insightful ideas” as one of her weakest points in English writing, along with lack of sophisticated lexis in academic writing. Like ME, she also claimed that it was challenging to write an academic paper “with in-depth research and insightful opinions.” She specifically mentioned that she wanted to develop data collection and analysis techniques as she was heavily engaged in research-related reading at NWU. She explained that, as an M.Ed. student, she was not required to write a thesis (see Chapter 5), but prompted by readings in classes in her first term at NWU, she began to see the benefits of conducting and writing a research paper as a TESOL professional.
Table 7.5: Shelley's self-assessment of her writing skills in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Pre-study</th>
<th>Informal Writing Tasks (8 tasks)</th>
<th>Pre-study</th>
<th>Pre-study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>2 Write a one or two sentence “thank you” note for a gift a friend sent to you</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>3 Write a brief email to a classmate explaining why I will not be able to attend the class today</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>4 Write a postcard to a friend describing what I have been doing on my vacation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>5 Write clear directions on how to get to my place</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>6 Write a short note to a friend describing how to find websites of his/her interest on internet</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>7 Write a complaint to a store manager about my dissatisfaction with an appliance I recently purchased</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>8 Write an email to my department secretary explaining I need a room for study meetings on certain days</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total points**

**Informal Writing Tasks**

**Average**

Note: On a scale of 1 (weak) to 5 (strong) for each task

Interestingly, Shelley was the only one to express her concerns regarding plagiarism in academic writing in English, “because [the] citation system [was] quite different from the traditional one in [her] native language.” Similar to some participants in Shi (2010), Shelley clearly demonstrated an awareness of citation practices and the danger of committing plagiarism unlike Eujin and DRY, who did not demonstrate prior knowledge about this issue. The differences among participants suggest that the knowledge that NNESs brought into the program...
was divergent and not necessarily aligned with others; also, their self-perception and performances varied largely due to the differences in their prior academic experiences.

Shelley returned to her country shortly after the end of data collection to continue with a master’s program at her home university (see 5.1.1.4 in Chapter 5 for details). Even after numerous attempts, I was not successful at conducting a post-study questionnaire and interview with her.

7.2 Socialization into becoming an academic writer

7.2.1 Learning the “ABCs” in academic writing at a graduate school

Among the participants, Eujin demonstrated perhaps the most dramatic socialization processes moving from a novice who did not even know what double spacing meant to an expert who successfully wrote and defended a thesis at the end of her study at NWU. As briefly mentioned in Chapter 5, when Eujin embarked on her graduate studies at NWU, she was unfamiliar with the parameters of North American academic literacy, even with seemingly “obvious” conventions like APA, plagiarism, or even double spacing. Moreover, her attempts to try “academic writing” resulted in rather frequent word choice errors. In one particular instance in class, upon hearing that the first writing assignment should be double-spaced, Eujin asked the instructor what “double space” meant. Although she later learned that she was not the only student without prior knowledge of this convention, disclosing her “ignorance”—even in an attempt to learn—made her the target of her classmates’ laughter. She felt marginalized as an incompetent and not a legitimate member of that CoP. She commented:
When I asked about double space in class, everyone laughed except the teacher. Some guys laughed so hard! But then I found out that I was not the only one who didn’t know about that. There were some other people who didn’t know that either.

(Eujin, I#2, Oct 3, 2008, K-original)

Throughout the interviews, Eujin often expressed her frustration with many difficulties in academic writing, language issues being the most fundamental. It was especially true during the first term, when “everything” seemed new and demanding. Despite the challenge, Eujin claimed she could successfully apprentice into academic writing with critical thinking and solid content. However, issues with her writing remained. Although her instructors often left positive feedback on some aspects of her papers (e.g., “good resources”, “very good references”, "good critics," and "a good point") (Instructor's comments, Graduate TESL 2, Fall 2008), the relative weakness of her academic writing was still apparent. For instance, when Eujin consistently used "research" as a countable noun in one of her course papers in the first term (e.g., I hope researches in this field prosper...; A research by...), an instructor specifically addressed this error by providing examples and instruction: "a study by... research by... but NOT a research by (= non count noun") (Instructor's comments, Graduate TESL 2, Fall 2008). Among the sentence-level issues in writing were awkward word choices, word form errors, active and passive voice errors, and direct translation from her L1. Below are some examples from one of her papers. The writing errors in her paper were marked by her instructor (noted in brackets):

... when conduction [conducting] research on ESL...

Methods adjusted in [designed for] ESL contexts arrived in EFL context and [were] assumed to be effective... Finding such as [out] what was happening in actual EFL classrooms could have easily be obtained through observation other [rather] than interviews and questionnaire.

[it] stirred to have me a lot of thoughts... [??]
For this particular paper, the instructor gave the following comments which demonstrate that although Eujin’s ideas were worthy of recognition and her academic writing was more sophisticated than before, there was still room for improvement.

I can see that you're also making great progress in your academic writing (perhaps trying a bit too hard to sound academic in places - resulting in the use of verbs that cannot be used as you want to)... you have an A- for the quality of writing but A for the ideas... you've really put a lot of thought and effort into this piece...

(Instructor's comments on Eujin's paper in Graduate TESL 2, Nov 2008)

In sum, for Eujin, the enormous expectations in graduate studies posed challenges, especially at the beginning of her studies. She felt she needed more time and resources to be socialized into her new CoP of academic writing, a gap also voiced in other studies (Kubota, 2009; Reder & Davila, 2007; Storch, 2009). While instructors rightfully expected a certain level of language competence and knowledge of the field from incoming graduate students, new graduate students like Eujin (see 5.1.1.2 in Chapter 5), who was an experienced language teacher and learner but new to the field, found even the first step in academic writing to be overwhelming.

Eujin stated that one of her objectives for studying at NWU was to learn from renowned scholars about the latest developments in the field. When she made such comments, she was not indicating a lack or scarcity of such instruction from the faculty. Rather, Eujin explained, the type of instructions and learning that took place at NWU was not always aligned with what she had anticipated. As noted by Farrell (2009), such discrepancies demonstrate the influence of previous schooling. Indeed, Eujin later claimed that she was perhaps looking for more one-to-one instruction befitting her individual needs. For Eujin, learning to adjust her expectations was another challenge to overcome.
7.2.2 Peer writing program

In response to the challenges of academic writing, the participants took various measures to improve their language ability and writing skills. For instance, Eujin regularly went to the institution’s writing center to seek help with her writing. ME and STRUGGLE, both doctoral students, occasionally asked for feedback on their papers from a more experienced peer in the department. Instructors also provided helpful resources and support, as reported by STRUGGLE: “I indeed learned a lot from my [instructors]. They provided a lot of support and feedback on my writings and suggested strong ideas to frame my work” (STRUGGLE, Post-study interview, July 2009, K/E-original).

Although most participants sought individual help, STRUGGLE repeatedly expressed her wish to have an experienced peer support group (i.e., “experts”) that could lend some advice to newcomers. She had had a good experience with peer support during her master’s program at another North American institution.

In the year of data collection, the department piloted a peer writing program in an attempt to meet its students’ academic writing needs. This initiative was greatly welcomed by many students in the program, including the participants of this study. Unfortunately, for various reasons, which will be discussed later, the participants of this study did not fully utilize this program. I will begin the next section by briefly describing the peer writing program at NWU, and then discuss a particular language socialization process (peer academic writing tutorials) that some of the participants were part of, to illustrate the multidirectional and reciprocal nature of language socialization (Duff & Talmy, 2011). As a language socialization incident, the peer writing program demonstrates the need for both novices and experts to be aware of the
complexities that arise in the language socialization process when the prior experiences, current expectations, and future trajectories of NNES students deviate from or conflict with the socialization efforts of experts.

7.2.2.1 What it was and how it worked

Before the peer academic writing tutor program started, all graduate students in the department were informed of a new initiative, a writing support group led by their peers (who were paid by the department). Those who were interested in the pilot program were asked to contact the coordinator via email to be matched up with a peer tutor. Each tutee was to set up a detailed schedule with his/her peer tutor. Initially, for many NNES students, this was good news; however, few enrolled in the end. STRUGGLE explained, “I think it was a good try. It seems to have a different focus from writing workshops [held by the department that I attended before] in that [the] help they’d give will be more individualized” (Joint I#1, Nov 6, 2008, K-original). DRY agreed, adding, “As an NNES, I welcome the peer writing program, since I can get some help with formatting and organization, and even coming up with more native-like expressions” (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original). Similarly, Eujin, who found the writing center on campus unhelpful due to some tutors' ineffectiveness in helping her with some conventions specific to her discipline, welcomed the initiative with open arms: “When I first heard about peer writing help, I thought ‘wow, they are going to give us the help we need!’ I was really excited” (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original).

Despite initial excitement and much anticipation, some of the participants reported unexpected challenges and actually resisted the peer advice they received, similar to the findings reported by Waring (2005). Some NNES participants found it awkward to be tutored by a “peer,”
since it posed potential power differences and was perceived to be face threatening. Especially for this group of students, who were from a hierarchical academic culture, where teaching and learning is conferred vertically from an expert to a novice, having a peer tutor considerably undermined their confidence as former English teachers and current graduate students.

For ME, a doctoral student, it was not easy to be a tutee. She imagined her embarrassment if she were to join the program: “I become a student. And my teacher will be my peer. It’d be kind of really weird feeling... (Laughs)” (ME, I#5, Nov 13, 2008, E-original). In fact, all my participants found the program awkward because all three participants happened to be enrolled in the same classes as their peer tutors. It was especially difficult for Eujin, who had been seeking help at the writing center earlier, but was avoiding a particular tutor at the center for a similar reason. She recalled, “[my classmate] works at a writing center. I tried to avoid her whenever possible because I feel awkward being in the same class [with her]” (Joint I#1, Nov 6, 2008, K-original). Although Eujin had initially welcomed the tutoring program, she later reported that she had found it to be more face threatening than she had previously imagined.

STRUGGLE cited yet another cultural reason as a partial explanation for the NNES students’ reactions: many NNES students are not accustomed to sharing their work with their peers. Although studies have shown that peer feedback is an alternative source of feedback that could aid L2 writing development (e.g., Séror, 2011), NNES students allow their writing to be assessed mostly by their instructors only, experts whose knowledge and experience they trust. STRUGGLE reported the following in the interview, to which two other Korean participants, DRY and Eujin, also agreed:

*When I showed my papers to other peers, I felt cultural conflicts. We are not from the culture where sharing work is common. NESs here tend to share their work and don’t...*
consider it as a “humiliating” experience. But when I first showed my work to others, I felt like being naked.

(Joint I#1, Nov 6, 2008, K-original)

This comment suggests that prior experiences or cultural expectations prevented the participants from fully engaging in the writing support program, a language socialization process that would have offered scaffolding and the chance to participate in co-constructive meaning making.

DRY provided a different point of view on the peer writing program in relation to the ownership of her ideas in writing (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original). She sought help from peer tutors a few times, but since all the peer tutors were taking the same courses she was, she was hesitant because asking them to read drafts of the assignment would give them the opportunity to get a glimpse of her ideas and insights. Her next comment resonates with the findings in Waring’s (2005) study, which discusses resistance from tutees when competing expertise exists in peer tutoring contexts where there could be a perceived conflict of interest on the part of the tutor:

*I wouldn’t mind getting peer feedback from any one, doctoral students or NES peers, as long as they are not taking the same course with me. Having the same assignment checked by a peer might make me uncomfortable, not because of this particular tutor, but [because of] ownership of ideas in my writing.*

(Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original)

However, despite all the aforementioned reasons to resist the peer tutor program, the participants asserted that they still welcomed the idea. All the participants sought help from these tutors at least once during the term. Their experiences varied, however, depending on the tutors
they were assigned and the number of reciprocal language socialization experiences they were able to share with them.

7.2.2.2 Peer tutoring as language socialization process

According to one of the peer tutors, this program was initially planned as a student-generated, 2-tier program, where a group of students, a tutor and a tutee, would work collaboratively to scaffold novice academic English writers. However, due to budget constraints and a low number of participants, it turned into a one-to-one tutor program (Peer tutor interview, Mar 17, 2009, E-original). This allowed more room for tutor and tutee to negotiate time and materials, leaving the details of each session at their discretion. Not surprisingly, the participants stated that their experiences in this form of language socialization varied greatly. For instance, DRY contacted her tutor a few times but the tutor was not available for the times she requested and did not give her much feedback on her paper sent via email. She also asserted that since she was not “paying” for this service, she did not feel it was legitimate to repeatedly ask him for the service (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original). Although all five of my participants sought help from tutors in this program at least once, they mostly corresponded via email with their peer tutors a few times in the first term, some only once, mainly due to the difficulties in negotiating times to meet (when and for how long) as they were all busy graduate students (Joint I#3, Nov 7, 2008, K-original).

This potential language socialization process demonstrates how a seemingly noble attempt initially welcomed by students can face some challenges due to unanticipated sociocultural and individual dynamics among the students. It serves as a fine example to illustrate that language socialization processes are indeed reciprocal (i.e., what deemed as
"helping" students was not received as such), unpredictable, multidirectional, and comprised of a number of intervening actors and incidents (Duff, 2003, 2010; Ilieva, 2010; Morita, 2000, 2004).

To this end, STRUGGLE proposed a student-initiated organization to “support and connect students to each other,” such as the study groups that had helped ME considerably. STRUGGLE reasoned that if the students initiated it themselves, it might work more effectively, provided that the students were proactive in initiating and implementing it (STRUGGLE, Post-study interview, July 2009, K/E-original). It turned out that, as of January 2015, there were several active student-initiated study groups in the department.

7.3 Summary

In this chapter, I have attempted to identify how participants’ self-assessments of the development of their writing evolved through language socialization processes. One interesting finding is that not all of the participants considered their writing to have improved after the first year of graduate study. Some claimed that learning and being more aware of the conventions of academic writing actually resulted in a stricter (lower) assessment of their writing. In other words, although their content knowledge increased and they became more comfortable writing in English, they did not feel confident in producing academic writing, even after a year in a graduate program. This result can perhaps be explained as follows: as they apprenticed into academic writing practices, conventions, and expectations, they acquired more expertise and knowledge about the complexity of academic writing, a type of writing that involves far more than grammatically correct sentences (Hanks, 1996). Hence, the more they learned, the more they recognized the gaps between expert-level writing and the quality of their own writing at this
point in their L2 writing development trajectory. Also, they noted that during the pre-study
questionnaire/interview they were mostly concerned about their ability to write grammatically
correct sentences or follow academic conventions like APA when they rated themselves as an
academic writer or a writer in general. However, with their new socialization experiences, they
were more aware of the need for clear argumentation, critical thinking, and voice, among others.
This realization served indeed as a forward step in their language socialization process, making
them more aware of the local and situated practices of the type of academic writing they were
expected to produce.

Also discussed were some socialization processes my participants reported, such as
having been apprenticed into the very basics of academic writing (or rather, mechanics of writing)
like formatting a paper according to APA guidelines. Various attempts at improving academic
writing, including seeking help from the peer writing program, were also discussed along with
implications of the complexities of language socialization (Duff & Talmy, 2011).

In Chapter 8, I will synthesize the findings and further elaborate on how the participants’
past experiences, future trajectories, as well as current demands guided their various language
socialization processes. I will conclude by discussing the implications and limitations of this
study as well as suggestions for future research.
Chapter 8

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study as they relate to the three research questions, followed by a discussion of the main theoretical contributions of the study to the applied linguistics literature on language socialization, language and identity, and L2 writing. Suggestions for future research are provided based on the findings and limitations of the study.

8.1 Summary of findings

This study investigates the language socialization experiences of five NNES graduate students majoring in a TESOL program in an English-medium university. The findings of this study reveal the complexity that characterizes the process of language socialization. This view is supported by other studies exploring different aspects of language socialization (e.g., Baquedano-Lopez & Kattan, 2008; Bayley & Schecter, 2003; Duff, 1995, 2002, 2008b, 2010; Morita, 2000, 2004; Séror, 2008; Zappa-Hollman, 2007). Collectively, these studies have revealed that becoming socialized into an L2 is an arduous, lengthy, and unpredictable process (Duff, 2003; Duff & Talmy, 2011) which can be best understood by means of longitudinal qualitative inquiry (Duff, 2008a).

The present study was guided by three research questions. First, what are some of the critical instances in socialization processes identified by NNES students in their first year of graduate studies, and how do such experiences impact their positioning of themselves in their program of study? Second, how do NNES graduate students in a TESOL program negotiate their identities as they switch roles from EFL teachers to ESL graduate students, and how do they participate in academic communities of practice? Finally, how do NNES graduate students
perceive their writing development through their socialization experiences in academic writing?

The first question this study sought to investigate concerns the critical instances identified by NNES students in their first year of graduate studies and how such experiences affect their positioning in their program of study. The data suggest that the participants, all former EFL teachers and also “proficient” English users, identified mismatches between the kinds of pedagogical practices promoted in their home country and those of the host academic culture. For example, Eujin noted how oral participation in class, which is expected and encouraged in class in Canada (especially in seminar classes in graduate studies) may not be favorably perceived by most Korean students, as they tend to perceive oral participation in class as “showing off” rather than actively participating and contributing to class discussions. Findings also demonstrate that the participants who considered themselves experts in teaching English in their home country positioned themselves and were positioned as novices in a new socialization context. Not only did they find the academic culture, practices, and demands to be unfamiliar, but also the English language, which they thought they were already very proficient in. The participants showed noticeable frustration and disappointment in the first few months after embarking on their graduate studies in their L2 as they realized the inadequacy of their academic English.

More importantly, for the participants, studying in their L2 was further complicated by the discourse of research and critical thinking in graduate school as well as by other contextual factors that made them feel marginalized during the first few months of their study. Their choice of pseudonyms, such as ME, STRUGGLE, and DRY, reflects the struggle they encountered. The participants’ experiences reveal discrepancies between the institutional and departmental requirements of graduate studies and the NNES students’ interpretation of the relevant
expectations of those requirements. To be precise, NNES students’ past experience as English professionals in their home country and their future trajectory of becoming better-qualified English professionals (after having learned new developments in the field and “improved” their English) did not correspond with the program’s expectation (as interpreted by the participants of this study) that its students will come equipped with research ideas, critical thinking abilities, and the writing skills to communicate their ideas effectively. Also, academic programs drawing on a diverse study body and offering multiple tracks or pathways for students in the same courses (e.g., M.Ed., M.A., and Ph.D.) posed unanticipated challenges in the first term in their program. Such discrepancies, along with the participants’ affirmation that they were “here to learn” and simultaneous resistance to some newfound expectations in their graduate studies, clearly illustrate the complexity of the language socialization process.

The second research question attempted to illuminate how these NNES graduate students negotiated their identities as they switched roles from EFL teachers to ESL graduate students to legitimate their participation in academic communities of practice. The findings revealed that through their engagement in different aspects of the graduate experience, such as class requirements and instructors’ expectations, the participants gained both awareness of and practice in various aspects of graduate studies in the Canadian context. In essence, the data suggests that the NNES students resisted the socially constructed label of "non" native speakers of English because it often represents deficiency in their linguistic and sociocultural knowledge in their communities of practice. Similar to other investigations that found that participants managed multiple and often hybrid identities in socialization experiences (Duff, 2002; Morita, 2000, 2004), the participants of this study tried many ways to negotiate and construct various identities in different socialization instances, sometimes negotiating more than two identities in
the same instance.

Seemingly contradictory but insightful findings of the present study further inform us of the complexity of the outcomes and processes of language socialization, including non-conformity, rejection, and partial and multiple community memberships with progress as well as setbacks (Duff, 2008c; Duff & Talmy, 2011). For instance, while the participants claimed they were willing to learn and be receptive as graduate students, their former identities as teachers were strong at times as was their ownership of their prior knowledge in EFL contexts. In other words, their socialization processes into academic culture were sometimes obscured by their resistance or unwillingness to accept the “new” knowledge. A related example would be the case of one of the participants, Eujin, who expressed her delight upon learning about the sociocultural theory of L2 learning, which to her was an “awakening” experience. At the same time, however, she was hesitant to fully accept this new knowledge because based on her prior experience she saw “a gap between theory and practice.”

The third question explored how NNES graduate students perceive their writing development through their socialization experiences in academic writing. The findings reveal that the participants were not always aware of the many sources of institutional support available to them, nor did they utilize these sources to their full extent due to divergent sociocultural expectations. For instance, a peer-tutor model, a program received favorably at first by most of the participants, was not effective in the end. The participants were rather resistant to co-constructively working with their NES peers because they feared it would be a face-threatening and/or awkward experience that would ultimately result in an imbalance in their social positioning relative to their peers.

Another finding of the research question provided insight into setbacks in language
socialization, for it is a lifelong and lifewide process (Duff, 2008c; Duff & Talmy, 2011).

Because writing is a major assessment tool and one of the most common socialization practices students tend to encounter, the participants were asked to self-assess their writing development in the first year of their studies. Apart from the actual and perhaps more objective measures such as marks on their individual papers or a qualitative analysis of their writing, the participants’ self-assessments reveals that as students became more aware of “cultural and social practices, values, and ideologies such as those governing… knowledge and language itself” (Paugh, 2005, p. 57), they tended to employ stricter assessment measures on themselves. In other words, the language socialization processes they experienced explicitly and implicitly taught them to be more conservative in evaluating themselves.

8.2 Contributions of the study

8.2.1 Language socialization

The present study has made theoretical contributions in relation to the application of the language socialization approach to the study of the demands NNES TESOL graduate students currently experience in their studies. While other studies have demonstrated the complexities of language socialization among this population of students (e.g., Choi, 2007; Hassan, 2011; Ilieva, 2010; Lin, 2011; Park, 2006), this study highlighted resistance and contestation aspects of language socialization. Like any process, language socialization into academic discourse is a dynamic and socially situated process which is often “multimodal, multilingual, and highly intertextual” (Duff, 2010, p. 169). As noted by Duff (2010), it inevitably requires participants to conform to or reproduce local norms and practices with varying degrees of contestation and resistance in various contexts. Findings in Chapter 6, in particular Shelley’s and Eujin’s cases, demonstrate such resistance. While they were learning of, conforming to, and trying to reproduce
what “experts,” who were better versed in theories and sociolinguistically situated writing practices, do in various academic situations, they often exhibited some resistance, especially when discussing L2 learning from a sociocultural point of view because it did not seem to have much meaningful relevance to their prior experiences or their future trajectories.

Also, socialization into academic publication (Duff, 2010) was discussed, albeit briefly, in this study. As doctoral student, STRUGGLE felt enormous pressure to work toward publishing her work, even in her first year when she did not yet have a focused, concrete research topic. Unlike her master’s program in American institution, the doctoral program expected a student to not only have a research focus from the beginning of their study, but also to have the ability to produce publications during their studies. Both expectations were viewed as new socialization challenges. This situation necessitates a discussion of the macro academic context for doctoral studies in Canada that did not correspond to expectations based on the former academic social experiences of STRUGGLE. It is also worth noting that, in Canada, applications for research funds from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), a federal funding agency for university-based research, and university-level graduate fellowship competitions for international students, are due at the beginning of the first term, usually at the end of September and often during the student’s first year in doctoral study (M.A. students can also apply while M.Ed. students are not eligible to apply). Such encouragement and requirement of identifying a research focus early in their study, along with NWU’s emphasis on research, confirm the view that yet another important academic language socialization practice including having a research topic, and being able to write effectively for research grant proposals and scholarships as well as for subsequent publication entails a number of embedded issues.

38 SSHRC funding is only available to domestic students, but general applications for scholarships for all graduate students are due at the same time.
Moreover, these differences in the expectations of the students producing academic writing and those instructors, journal editors, or other reviewers assessing it, were often evident (Reder & Davila, 2007).

In this regard, this study contributes to the discussion of the ideological considerations in language socialization research (e.g., Duff, 1995; Talmy, 2008, 2009). For instance, the present data suggest that much of the participants’ investment in graduate studies in an English-speaking country was based on their ideological notions of what it meant to be “good” English teachers. Some of them came to pursue their studies in order to be academically more informed and linguistically more competent NNES teachers upon their return home. They also wished to be competent and valuable members of a graduate student body in their program, but these objectives were by no means uniform or stationary as their socialization processes developed.

Moreover, this study reaffirms that socialization processes are dynamic and complex (Duff, 2003, 2010), involving various processes and outcomes. Depending on agency, identities, desires/needs, trajectories, and goals, among other factors, the socialization process of the new learners varies greatly and does not always move toward the target culture and communities. Language socialization is also reciprocal in that even if an expert is willing to assist, a novice also needs to be willing to participate. A case in point is the pilot peer-tutor program which was discontinued after it failed to meet the expectations of both NNES students and the department which initiated the program. The few students who participated found the program socially awkward and face-threatening despite their initial belief that the program could improve their writing. In particular, this study confirms that language socialization processes are neither uniform nor predictable, but rather co-constructive and multi-directional in nature.
8.2.2 Language and identity: Construction and negotiation by NNESs

Findings of this study support the argument that the concept of identity, especially among NNESs, needs to be reexamined. By analyzing data through the theoretical framework of language socialization (Duff, 1996; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986) and community of practice approaches (Lave & Wenger, 1991), I demonstrated how NNES graduate students construct, reconceptualize, and negotiate their identities or position themselves in relation to NESs and other NNESs. Identity construction is an important part of language socialization because it can affect learners’ overall language socialization and even the outcomes of their academic pursuits. It is particularly relevant for NNESs, who often have different experiences and future trajectories than local students. The experiences of reconceptualizing themselves or shifting their identities between expert and novice, as well as negotiating their multiple voices and identities (e.g., Gale, 1994; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Shen, 1989) in new communities of practice, could add extra challenges to their language socialization and impact their academic performance in the long run.

The study highlights the participants’ struggle to construct their identity with and through discourse based on the types of social norms and practices particular to North American schools, namely, verbally participating in classrooms and writing research papers. As noted by Norton and Toohey (2004), language is more than a means of communication; rather, it should be understood as “a practice that constructs, and is constructed by, the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future” (p. 1). Identity is thus fluid, contested, contingent, and hybrid in nature, rather than being fixed and dichotomized. It is the same with the notion of expert (e.g., NESs) versus novice (e.g., NNESs) and whether identity is self-inflected or constructed by others during language socialization processes (Duff, 2003, 2007; Talmy, 2008). By redefining NNES identity not as
fixed but as constantly negotiated, this study argues that we should see NNESs as multicompetent, legitimate, and full members of graduate students’ communities of practice in North American academia, rather than language-deficient, peripheral members (Cook, 2005; Pavlenko, 2003). This study suggests that NNESs should be empowered to make the best of their investment by perceiving themselves as individuals with unique needs, values, and goals and recognizing their multiple and hybrid identities.

8.2.3 Becoming L2 writers: A language socialization perspective

This dissertation also provides a unique perspective to the field of L2 writing development by combining an academic language socialization approach with a detailed examination of (reported) local practices and their impact on graduate NNES writers from an emic perspective. To date, the combination of these two areas, particularly in the form of a longitudinal study, has not been extensively employed (e.g., Casanave, 2002; Séror, 2008; Spack, 1997), either in the field of L2 writing development or in socialization research. This study attempted to combine these two seemingly different modes of communication (i.e., verbal vs. written) and understand them by obtaining “voices” from the participants on their L2 writing development. It is important to note that as NNESs’ understanding and language socialization experience expanded and they became more aware of discrepancies between graduate level writing and their own writing, their assessment of their own writing tended to be harsher.

I argue that this realization is actually a fine example of academic socialization because as these learners acquire and are apprenticed into the skills necessary to become academic writers, they are better equipped to assess their writing according to the expectations of their field. Their realization of such discrepancies seems especially meaningful because it is a step
toward strengthening their skills in writing that could potentially give them “power” or capital in this setting.

### 8.3 Implications

The study illustrates that novices, whether they are NESs, NNESs, or even former EFL teachers, often struggle and find themselves not valued when their prior worldviews, ideologies, values, and experiences are not affirmed or rewarded in their new CoPs in graduate studies. In addition, international students in particular are often unfamiliar with aspects of graduate education in different institutional contexts, and these may not be well explained in online or other program materials available to prospective students. Furthermore, the abilities required to engage successfully in graduate-level research and the writing of term papers or theses may not be well understood by students. They may have very high expectations of themselves and may underestimate the time required to develop academic literacy in English.

There are therefore a number of implications arising from this study. First, various institutional constraints affect students’ experiences in terms of the amount and type of supervision, feedback, mentoring, and writing support that is available. Therefore, ways of leveraging greater support and better managing students’ expectations are needed. International students are recruited for multiple reasons, one of which is to fill programs with “qualified” students. However, despite being in the same graduate program, students often have individual strengths and weaknesses, different expectations and goals, and require various types and levels of support. There may be a mismatch between students’ needs and the resources available to effectively address those needs. Although this study did not explore institutional constraints in detail, other studies have examined how socialization is both facilitated and inhibited by issues
such as faculty workload or institutional priorities (e.g., favouring research over professional programs). As Séror (2008) informs us, exploring the impact of institutional pressures on L2 learning beyond the context of the classroom suggests that faculty responses to students’ desires to become better and more valued writers, for example, are constrained by workload and reward structures (especially in undergraduate contexts, in his research). Some of the students’ concerns cannot be easily addressed at the local program level alone and must be part of larger institutional discussions about the provision of suitable support for international students.

A second, related implication is about students’ perceptions of their own disciplinary learning, progress, and goals. As demonstrated in this study, socialization into new academic communities and practices can involve vacillating performance and perspectives (successes, struggles) and is not linear. Rather, there can be dramatic ups and downs, or U-shaped development, along the way. Eujin was one such case. She was initially very excited by sociocultural theory; then disillusioned; and then, finally, following her graduation, she chose to pursue a Ph.D. involving sociocultural theory. It is therefore important for instructors and students to better understand such processes and the positive and negative emotions students may experience, particularly in the first semester (but also throughout the program).

Third, opportunities for students to discuss their experiences in “safe places” where they can share resources, strategies, and concerns might be very helpful. Students could benefit from supportive social networks. Low-stakes, self-organized peer study groups and other initiatives that are not considered face-threatening to students would help. Zappa (2007) demonstrated that strong interpersonal relations positively affect the language socialization of NNESs in ESL contexts (just as they do with domestic students) to a great extent (see also Zappa-Hollman & Duff, 2014). As discussed in Chapter 7, participants in this study were deterred from taking
advantage of a peer tutoring program because they feared it might cause interpersonal difficulties (embarrassment or awkwardness) or compromise their social positioning (as peers). Therefore, it is conceivable that encouraging NNESs to take initiatives to enhance their own learning would be more beneficial. Interestingly, numerous student-initiated programs have been started in the department at NWU since the end of the data collection for this study, including several study groups with various focuses that have been very well received. Related to this, the program orientation at the beginning of the academic year now is organized by continuing graduate students (program peer advisors) providing advice and mentoring related to a number of academic and social activities and then follow-up events (by students, for students) throughout the year.

Fourth, greater support is needed for students’ English academic writing specifically. The participants of the study initially viewed themselves as competent writers. They had, after all, been admitted to the graduate program in TESL based on their experience, grades, and language scores, and had good reason to believe they were academically strong and sufficiently proficient in English. However, their writing and English teaching in EFL contexts had been mostly form-focused and their experience with English academic writing was often limited and general (not discipline- or genre-specific). This challenge was especially acute for doctoral students in the study faced with pressure to publish their research.

Finally, several paradoxes or contradictions were discussed in this thesis. One student, DRY, explained that she was already over-committed given her work, family, graduate studies (taking more courses than others), and additional responsibilities. She noted that her assignments in the program suffered due to time constraints. However, she resented it greatly when she was not allowed to transfer to an even more intensive research track requiring thesis writing. Some
other students complained about their desire to improve in their academic writing but they resisted opportunities to engage with peer tutoring and also declined to share their writing with me or others who might provide some assistance. Another contradiction is that students noted that they felt marginalized in class discussions but sometimes chose not to speak in class, further adding to their sense of feeling excluded in their classroom community.

These institutional, local, cultural, and personal constraints and challenges are likely not unique to this program. They should be examined more closely by graduate programs and researchers in English-medium universities elsewhere as well to better accommodate the changing backgrounds, experiences, and needs of students.

8.4 Limitations

It is important to remember that the participants of this study came from two linguistic backgrounds (Korean and Chinese), each of which represents a much larger, diverse group of students, abilities, and experiences. Furthermore, the focal participants were all female adult students interested in participating in a study such as this one. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the views, expectations, and experiences of others, both males and females, in the same group might have been somewhat different, had there been different participants, even with a similar background. This illustrates one of the limitations of qualitative case studies such as this: that is, the difficulty of generalizing the findings to the wider population and to other contexts despite some of the known advantages of having rich and in-depth data, which could not have been obtained in quantitative surveys (Denzin, & Lincoln, 2003; Dirkx & Barnes, 2004; Duff, 2008a; Merriam, 1988, 1998; Yin, 2003a, 2003b). However, I should note that this study aims to contribute to the understanding of NNES graduate students in a language education
program in a Canadian university, where a considerable proportion of the student population is NNESs (not unlike many other TESOL graduate programs in Canada and the United States). As such, the findings could serve to inform stakeholders (universities and students) of the various expectations of those involved, potentially leading to better mutual understanding, less initial disappointment, and enhanced educational practice and learning.

Also, my role as a researcher sharing the same ethnic background with three of the participants needs to be examined. Even with the benefits and insights of the emic perspective I brought to this study, I also acknowledge I might have influenced some of my participants, as I was sometimes engaged in the same activities as my participants (such as attending a student-run conference) and I co-constructed interviews with them.

More importantly, and perhaps inevitably, the majority of my data came from the participant students, and the perspectives of their instructors and the institution were not robustly represented. Although this study was meant to highlight the perspectives of NNES students who brought unique and most often divergent trajectories and expectations, extra data from other sources could have enriched my analysis by providing more contextualization of the findings. For instance, looking at more of their actual writing along with any feedback and assistance they received at different points in their first year would have helped illustrate the nature of their challenges, abilities, and development. In addition, contextualization of the first year language socialization experiences in a way that included academic, sociocultural, and personal challenges would have elicited more thorough language socialization accounts from the participants.

Finally, I must admit the problematic use of dichotomized notions/terms of NESs and NNESs in this study. Although it was specifically noted in the beginning of this dissertation that these terms were used for illustration purposes only and not to reify the notions these terms
might imply, the very use of such terms for lack of better alternatives might have, in fact, reified them. With these limitations, I now turn to suggestions for future research.

8.5 Suggestion for future research

To gain a better understanding of learning contexts and academic acculturation, this study focused more on the language socialization experiences of L2 writers and less on the L2 writing processes themselves. Some of the participants were unwilling\(^{39}\) to share evidence of their writing processes by providing me with multiple drafts, the marks they received, or their instructors’ comments, which could have further enriched the data collected, and perhaps contextualized some of their comments. Therefore, future investigations could examine the actual processes involved in NNES students’ writing, looking at several drafts of their papers and comments and feedback from instructors (Sêror, 2008), along with the students’ perceptions of their writing progress. Richer data might help illustrate their socialization into academic writing from diverse viewpoints rather than just from the emic perspective of the participants.

Another interesting line of research could be the practices and perspectives of instructors and the department as whole, particularly in terms of requirements and expectations of their first-year graduate students, be they M.A., M.Ed. or Ph.D. students. Such institutional expectations have been identified as key aspects of students’ educational experiences (as presented in Chapter 5), and such data would also be helpful for triangulation and more balanced reporting. Future studies looking at the effects of continuous, tangible and intangible assistance from institutions to new NNES students (in the form of workshops, peer support groups, or orientations, to name a few) might reveal issues that have not been explored so far and were beyond the scope of this

\(^{39}\) For instance, no one provided their TOEFL/IELTS scores asked on Pre-study questionnaire.
study.

Also, it would be interesting to compare NNES students with NES students to investigate the potential effects of linguistic issues on graduate studies (Morita, 2000). It would be interesting to see whether NES graduate students also have issues with academic literacy and writing and if so, to what degree, or if it is only NNES students who tend to struggle with these issues, as some of the participants in this study claimed.

8.6 **Reflections: My socialization in learning to conduct research**

While conducting this research, I experienced a number of critical instances in my own socialization processes involving a lot of progress and setbacks, disappointments and accomplishments. I apprenticed into a CoP of TESOL professionals by conducting research where I have been an oldtimer for many years, but had not felt legitimate. Every step of conducting research (as illustrated in Chapter 4) posed some sort of challenge but granted learning experience at the same time. In particular, I learned to appreciate the contribution of participants to the study and the valuable data they were willing to share. While I was overly ambitious in collecting extensive interview data, I did not expect that participants’ hesitance or refusal to provide writing samples would limit my data as it did. Nevertheless, with this study and the new understanding I acquired by socializing into writing a thesis, I found myself empowered and a more legitimate member of my CoP.

In this doctoral study, I have investigated the complex socialization processes of NNESs as they acculturate into graduate studies in an English-speaking university in North America. In particular, I have argued for the need to widely adopt the language socialization approach for a better and deeper understanding of the learning processes of these students. I have also supported
the necessity to redefine and recognize the diverse needs of NNES students, as their positioning and negotiation of identities have proven to have a notable impact on their language socialization. Findings of this study not only enrich the literature focusing on NNES students’ L2 academic writing socialization, but also make NNES students and institutions more aware of their needs and expectations. This may potentially lead to the development of efficient institutional support systems, such as more field-specific workshops and interpersonal and departmental networks, to adequately address and respond to the needs of these students. In turn, such support will help this particular group of students improve their learning potential, seek a favourable outcome from their academic pursuits, and make stronger contributions to their chosen academic community.
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Kubota, R. (1999a). The author responds. Comments on Ryuko Kubota’s “Japanese culture constructed by discourses: Implications for applied linguistics research and ELT.” *TESOL*


Appendix A

Letter of invitation for students

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Language and Literacy Education
2034 Lower Mall Road
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4

Advertisement for Participation

In a research project on graduate students’ language socialization experiences in academic writing

Six to eight to volunteers who are first year non-native English speaking (NNES) graduate students in the department of Language and Literacy Education at UBC specializing in TESL (Teaching of English as a Second Language) program are invited to participate in a study entitled, “Reinventing oneself from EFL teacher to ESL graduate student: Second language writers’ language socialization experiences at a Canadian university.” The purpose of this study is to investigate how NNES graduate students majoring in a TESL program learn to do academic writing in a new context, and to identify personal and immediate challenges and needs in their writing process. It is anticipated that findings of the study suggest efficient educational support measures that institutions can provide to help this particular group of students make better connections between their prior experiences, current demands, and future goals in their second language writing.

If you are willing to participate, the co-investigator Mi-Young Kim, will meet you for an hour long pre-study interview, then every two weeks for about 16 one-hour interviews over an academic year. There will also be an hour long post-study interview at the end of the second term. You will also be encouraged to keep journals or take notes that identify experiences and challenges in your second language writing in your first year. If you agree to write journals, there will be an extra 32 hours (about an hour a week for eight months) required. There will be a few occasions of classroom observations in your class throughout the term as well.

If you would like more information or want to participate in the study, please contact Dr. Shi or Mi-Young Kim. You can also meet Dr. Shi in her office in Room 223, 2034 Lower Mall Road.
Appendix B

Letter of invitation for instructors

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Letter of initial contact

Dear Instructor,

We would like to invite you to participate in our study entitled, “Reinventing oneself from EFL teacher to ESL graduate student: Second language writers’ language socialization experiences at a Canadian university.” The purpose of this study is to investigate how NNES graduate students majoring in a TESL program learn to do academic writing in a new context, and to identify personal and immediate challenges and needs in their writing process. It is anticipated that findings of the study suggest efficient educational support measures that institutions can provide to help this particular group of students make better connections between their prior experiences, current demands, and future goals in their second language writing. You are invited because at least one of the graduate student participants has taken your class last term.

If you participate in the study, the co-investigator Mi-Young Kim will interview you after the student-participants’ final grades for the course are submitted. The interview will take about one hour. Apart from some questions about your teaching experiences with NNES students, you will be invited to comment on the student-participants’ writing required in your class, as well as their language socialization experiences in your class. The interview will be tape-recorded. There will be a few occasions of classroom observations in your class throughout the term as well.

Your identity will be kept confidential as pseudonyms will be used in any reports of the completed study.

If you are interested or have further questions about the study, please contact Dr. Shi or Mi-Young Kim. You can also meet Dr. Shi in her office in Room 223, 2034 Lower Mall Road.

Thank you in advance for your participation in the study.

Sincerely,

Ling Shi, Principal investigator, Associate Professor
Mi-Young Kim, Co-investigator, Doctoral student
2034 Lower Mall Road; UBC, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z2
Appendix C

Informed consent form for students

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Language and Literacy Education
2034 Lower Mall Road
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4

Dear Student,

As principal and co-investigators, we would like to invite you to participate in our research entitled, “Reinventing oneself from EFL teacher to ESL graduate student: Second language writers’ language socialization experiences at a Canadian university.” The purpose of the study is to investigate the language socialization (LS) experiences of non-native English speaking (NNES) graduate students majoring in a TESL program in the light of the increasing popularity and interest in English learning as well as TESL programs in many of these students’ home countries, and to identify more personal and immediate needs of the students and suggest efficient educational support measures that institutions can provide to help this particular group of students make better connections between their prior experience, current demands, and future goals in their L2 writing.

If you are willing to participate, the co-investigator Mi-Young Kim, will meet you for an hour long pre-study interview, then every two weeks for about 16 one-hour interviews over an academic year. There will also be an hour long post-study interview at the end of the second term. You Interviews will mainly focus on investigating your LS experiences in academic writing, and will be audiotaped. You will also be encouraged to keep journals or take notes that identify experiences and challenges in your second language writing in your first year. If you agree to write journals, there will be an extra 32 hours (about an hour a week for eight months) required. We would also like to collect other written documents such as your course assignments and course outlines. There will be a few occasions of classroom observations in the class you are taking throughout the term as well.

Your identity will be kept confidential, and pseudonyms will be used in our final report. All documents will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. We will be the only people who have access to your writing samples and information you provide at the interviews. All the information you provide will be kept securely and then be destroyed when the study is completed. Some of your instructors will be interviewed after your final grades are submitted.

You can choose not to participate in the study. If you choose to withdraw from the research, you can do so at any time without any penalty or further obligation. If you have any concerns regarding your rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact the UBC Office of Research Services and Administration at 604-822-8598. You can also contact us if you have any questions about the research. There is no known risk, and you should be able to benefit from the study by developing more sociocultural awareness for your academic studies.

Please sign on the next page of the consent form if you decide to participate and return a copy of the page to us. You are advised to keep the consent form for your future reference. Thank you in advance for your participation in the study.

Sincerely,

Ling Shi, Associate Professor
Mi-Young Kim, Ph.D. Candidate
2034 Lower Mall Road; UBC, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z2
Appendix D

Informed consent form for instructors

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Dear Instructor,

As principal and co-investigators, we would like to invite you to participate in our research entitled, “Reinventing oneself from EFL teacher to ESL graduate student: Second language writers’ language socialization experiences at a Canadian university.” The purpose of this study is to investigate how NNES graduate students majoring in a TESL program learn to do academic writing in a new context, and to identify personal and immediate challenges and needs in their writing process. It is anticipated that findings of the study suggest efficient educational support measures that institutions can provide to help this particular group of students make better connections between their prior experiences, current demands, and future goals in their second language writing. You are invited because at least one of the graduate student participants has taken your class last term.

If you participate in the study, the co-investigator Mi-Young Kim will interview you after the student-participants’ final grades for the course are submitted. The interview will take about one hour. Apart from some questions about your teaching experiences with NNES students, you will be invited to comment on the student-participants’ writing required in your class, as well as their language socialization experiences in your class. The interview will be tape-recorded. There will be a few occasions of classroom observations in your class throughout the term as well.

Your identity will be kept confidential, and pseudonyms will be used in our final report. All documents will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. We will be the only people who have access to your writing samples and information you provide at the interviews. All the information you provide will be kept securely and then be destroyed when the project is completed.

You can choose not to participate in the study. If you choose to withdraw from the research, you can do so at any time without any penalty or further obligation. If you have any concerns regarding your rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact the UBC Office of Research Services and Administration at 604-822-8598. You can also contact us if you have any questions about the research.

Please sign on the next page of the consent form if you decide to participate and return a copy of the page to us. You are advised to keep the consent form for your future reference.

Thank you in advance for your participation in the study.

Sincerely,

Ling Shi, Associate Professor
Mi-Young Kim, Doctoral student
2034 Lower Mall Road; UBC, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z2
Appendix E

Transcription conventions

(A simplified version of the Jeffersonian Transcription Notation, modified from Wooffitt, 2005, p. 211)

(0.5) The number in brackets indicates a time gap in tenths of a second.

((laughs)) A description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity such as laughs.

- A dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound.

: Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter. The more colons, the greater the extent of the stretching.

( ) Empty parentheses indicate the presence of an unclear fragment on the tape.

. A full stop indicates a stopping fall in tone. It does not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence.

, A comma indicates a continuing intonation.

? A question mark indicates a rising inflection. It does not necessarily indicate a question.

Under Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.

↑↓ Pointed arrows indicate a marked falling or rising intonational shift. They are placed immediately before the onset of the shift.

> < “More than” and “less than” signs indicate that the talk they encompass was produced noticeably quicker than the surrounding talk.

= The “equal” sign indicates contiguous utterances.

[ [ A double left-hand bracket indicates that speakers start a turn simultaneously.
Appendix F

Pre-study interview questionnaire

These questions have been designed to investigate your experience as second language (English) writer, and your concerns/views on your English writing.

I. Personal history/goals

1. Name (will not be disclosed); A preferred pseudonym (if you have any)
2. Age/Gender
4. Discipline of study (during the undergraduate program)
5. An overall TOEFL or TOEIC score; writing score (Test of Written English), if applicable
6. The number of years of studying English (both formal and informal). Be specific.
7. The number of years/months of study abroad experience in English-speaking countries, if applicable
8. Any other investments in learning English before coming to Canada
9. Any notable personal experience related to learning English
10. The number of years teaching English/teaching context (employer, level of students, place, etc). Be specific.
11. Classes currently taking; a percentage of required writing to a total score
12. Classes planning to take the next term; a percentage of required writing to a total score, if known

II. Writing in English

1. Are you confident writing in English in general?
2. How would you rate yourself as an academic writer in the scale of 1 (weak) to 10 (excellent)?

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<tr>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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3. What is your biggest concern with your writing in English? Any minor worries? e.g.) weak grammar, lack of sophisticated lexis, ignorance of English academic writing conventions such as APA style, not knowing the audience, not knowing the right level of class to take, among others.
4. What areas of writing do you find particularly challenging for you?
5. What areas of writing do you want to see improved?
6. Do you consider yourself a good writer in your native language? How would you rate yourself as a writer?

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<th>Weak</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>10</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Do you find informal writing in English as difficult/easy as academic writing? If so, why?
8. Add any concerns on L2 writing, if you wish.
III. Self-assessment questions on writing skills in English

Circle the one number that is most true for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Informal Writing Tasks</th>
<th>In English, I can...</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Write a brief note of reminders for a weekend trip</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Write a one or two sentence “thank you” note for a gift a friend sent to me</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Write a brief email to a classmate explaining why I will not be able to attend the class today</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Write a postcard to a friend describing what I have been doing on my vacation</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Write clear directions on how to get to my place</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Write a short note to a friend describing how to find websites of his/her interest on internet</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Write a complaint to a store manager about my dissatisfaction with an appliance I recently purchased</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Write an email to my department secretary explaining I need a room for study meetings on certain days</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Formal/Academic Writing Tasks</th>
<th>In English, I can...</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fill out an online application form for an online course</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Write a formal letter to future graduate students from my home university describing various aspects of NWU and the city where it is located</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Write a cover letter introducing myself and describing my qualifications for a teaching job application</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Write an email to my professor describing the progress being made on a current project or assignment</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Write a summary of the main points of a talk (seminar) I recently attended</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Write a 10-page paper on second language learning</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Write a research proposal as a term paper for a research methodology course at NWU</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 (Not too well) 3 (Fair) 5 (Very well)


IV. Socialization experiences at NWU

1. What aspects of graduate life at NWU have you found to be most challenging so far (e.g., getting used to academic literacy, Canadian academic culture, etc.)?

2. How are they similar or different from what you have expected them to be?

3. What have you done to resolve any issue (e.g., academic or otherwise) that you have encountered at NWU? Are you getting adequate and timely assistance from faculty members of your colleagues? If not, what could be done to make it better?

4. Anything you'd like to add or see discussed?
Appendix G

Guiding questions for semi-monthly interviews

*Please be specific in your answers.

1. How much writing was required in your class during the last two weeks?
2. How much writing did you voluntarily do besides what was required?
3. How do you feel about the progress of your writing in English?
4. How confident are you in writing papers for your class? What aspects of writing do you find particularly challenging?
5. What are some of your ways (methods, strategies) of overcoming challenges in your writing?
6. Any other concerns you want to address?
Appendix H

Post-study interview questionnaire

I. Academic writing in English

1. How confident are you writing in English after studying a year at NWU (or after being more aware of your writing needs and challenges through studying at NWU and participating in this study)?

2. How would you rate yourself as academic English writer in the scale of 1 (weak) to 10 (excellent) now?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. What, in your opinion, helped you the most with academic writing in English? What could have helped? Elaborate.

4. What remains to be your biggest concern with your English writing now?

5. What were the most challenging aspects of academic writing in English in your first year at NWU?

6. Do you think your previous professional experience as teacher before joining the TESL program at NWU helped you gain adequate writing skills in English? If not, what do you see as lacking or in need of improvement? Or do you think otherwise (e.g., it's not a problem because I can learn what I need here)?

7. Any final thoughts or comments on your socialization process in academic literacy at NWU in general? Feel free to share what you would like for me to add or elaborate on behalf of you.
II. Self-assessment questions on writing skills in English (adjusted to reflect their experience at NWU)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Informal Writing Tasks</th>
<th>Formal/ Academic Writing Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Write a brief note of reminders for a weekend trip</td>
<td>Fill out an online application form for an online course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Write a one or two sentence “thank you” note for a gift a friend sent me</td>
<td>Write a formal letter to future graduate students from my home university describing various aspects of NWU and the city where it is located</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Write a brief email to a classmate explaining why I will not be able to attend the class today</td>
<td>Write a cover letter introducing myself and describing my qualifications for a teaching job application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Write a postcard to a friend describing what I have been doing on my vacation</td>
<td>Write an email to my professor describing the progress being made on a current project or assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Write clear directions on how to get to my place</td>
<td>Write a summary of the main points of a talk (seminar) I recently attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Write a short note to a friend describing how to find websites of his/her interest on internet</td>
<td>Write a 10-page paper on second language learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Write a complaint to a store manager about my dissatisfaction with an appliance I recently purchased</td>
<td>Write a research proposal as a term paper for a research methodology course at NWU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Write an email to my department secretary explaining I need a room for study meetings on certain days</td>
<td>(Post-study only) Write an empirical research paper for a possible publication in an academic journal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 (Not too well) 3 (Fair) 5 (Very well)