

"The unfluency of my language":  
Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers' Self-Image and Confidence  
in Second Language Teacher Education Programs

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
The University of Manitoba  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

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(In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Dispenser of Grace)

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## Abstract

The intent of this research is to examine non-native English-speaking teachers' (NNESTs) confidence and self-image in second language teacher education programs. Twelve NNESTs, by way of a questionnaire, drawings and interviews, describe their feelings and perspectives on becoming a certified teacher of English as a Second Language (ESL). The findings show that NNESTs are a mixed group of international students, landed immigrants and Canadian citizens; their confidence levels fluctuate due to their linguistic concerns of oral language proficiency; and they have professional concerns of having adequate Canadian cultural knowledge as future teachers of English in Canada. Due to NNESTs' differential motives for enrolling in teacher education and concerns about future employment prospects, second language teacher education programs are not meeting the needs of NNESTs, but NNESTs do benefit from these programs. Suggestions are provided for building NNESTs' confidence in these programs, including addressing racism; using NNESTs' professional experiences from their homeland as a class activity; and introducing NNESTs to the growing body of professional literature that addresses their concerns and perspectives.

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## Acronyms

Acronyms used in this thesis:

|             |                                                                                                      |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EFL         | English as a foreign language (in countries where English is not recognized as an official language) |
| ELT         | English language training                                                                            |
| ESL         | English as a second language                                                                         |
| NEST        | native English-speaking teachers                                                                     |
| NNEST       | non-native English-speaking teachers                                                                 |
| SLA         | second-language acquisition                                                                          |
| TESL Canada | Teaching English as a Second Language<br>(Canadian-based organization)                               |

TESOL

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other  
Languages (American-based organization)

A number of terms have been used to describe native and non-native English-speaking teachers in the professional literature. Some examples are non-NEST, non-native-speaker teachers, NS (native-speaker) and NNS (non-native-speaker) teachers, and NESB (non-English-speaking background). For the purpose of clarification, I will use the terms NEST and NNEST throughout this thesis.

## Chapter One: Introduction

I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.

Mohandas K. Gandhi (1864-1948)

Empirical data and published studies about the concerns, perspectives, and experiences of the non-native English-speaking teacher (NNEST) are steadily increasing, with both NNESTs and native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) contributing their perspectives. The research has expanded from the NEST/NNEST dichotomy to examine special concerns of NNESTs, including world Englishes, ethnic and linguistic discrimination, intelligibility factors, professional preparation, credentialing in predominantly English-speaking countries, and employment concerns.

The potential benefits of being a NNEST include being bilingual or multilingual and bicultural or multicultural; further, students can benefit from the language-learning experiences of the teacher who struggled to learn the language well enough to teach it. In a broad sense, the more you know as a teacher, the more potential you have to be aware of your teaching environment. Milambiling (1999) used the term "multicompetent" to suggest that all teachers, regardless of their backgrounds, should have some knowledge of other languages and cultures. These attributes may serve well in a teaching milieu if all

parties involved—students, their parents, colleagues, administrators, and employment officials—understand the benefits of having both NESTs and NNESTs on staff.

At the same time, the differences between the two groups of teachers should not be ignored. Rather, as Rampton (1990) maintains, focus should be on "language expertise" as "the notion of expert shifts the emphasis from 'who you are' to 'what you know'" (p. 99). While the spread of English because of technological advances and globalization is an undeniable fact, numerous localized forms (e.g., Indian English) are also gaining ground. There are two implications for the spread of English: (a) more non-native speakers using English to communicate with one another, and (b) an increase of non-native speakers in Western English-as-second-language teacher education programs (Braine, 2004; Liu, 2004, Kamhi-Stein, 2004, Cruickshank et al., 2003).

Reporting on NNESTs is on the increase in academic journals; yet, the data investigating Canadian NNESTs' experiences and confidence are sparse. Lacking as well in the studies are the authentic voices of NNESTs in preservice second-language teacher education programs. I believe that it is time to address the gap of information about NNESTs in Canadian programs; hence the need and context for this research.

### *Aim*

In this exploratory study, I examine the self-image and confidence of 12 non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) in Canadian English-as-a-second-language (ESL) teacher education programs. The study will focus on their changing self-image as they engage in professional ESL teacher education in Canada, and, presumably, if it changes. Most of the participants had no professional training or education in pedagogy prior to

coming to Canada, so in many respects they are responding to their changing understanding of themselves as professionals and also of their chosen profession, not just to their status as NNESTs. In this study, I will examine three concepts arising from the findings: the variety of NNESTs (international students, landed immigrants, Canadian citizens); linguistic issues; and professional concerns. The study will also look at whether these NNESTs are getting what they need from such programs and will provide suggestions on how preservice second-language teacher education programs can improve services to non-native speakers of English.

*Experiential Context.* The relationships among language, identity, and self-image are complex, especially when theories of language and theories of identity are inconclusive (Norton, 1997). For me, the three concepts are continually evolving. I am a bilingual speaker of Hindi and English and am learning Arabic as an adult. I am a native speaker of English because I was raised and educated in Canada from age 3; the issue of being a native or non-native speaker of English was never a concern for me in my early years.

I became aware of the implications of the native/non-native speaker dichotomy when I travelled to the Middle East in my early twenties. I secured a teaching position at a private girls school in Saudi Arabia with merely a high-school education. I believe that I was given preferential treatment over my Jamaican friend simply because she had a particular accent, though her speech was clear. My multilingual, Arabic-speaking teacher colleagues spoke English well, but for 3 years I was the only native speaker in the school, for which I received much praise. Yet outside of the school, whenever local women asked me where I was from, "Canada" was not a satisfactory response for them because they

assumed that real Canadians are White, Anglo-Saxon people who are owners of the English language. They seemed relieved when I told them that my ancestors hailed from south Asia. Although I was proud to be a Canadian and, in the beginning of my stay there, proud to be a native speaker of English, I became cognizant that my self-image perceptions were changing according to which environment or group of people I was dealing with. On reflection, I am even more curious now about the manner in which I handled these perceptions.

Since my travels overseas, I have been interested in the life experiences and self-perceptions of NNESTs, especially those teachers who come from countries where English is not an official language. Some of the issues we would discuss pertained to discrimination, to teaching about culture when the teacher has never experienced the culture represented in textbooks, and to language varieties and usage. This study interests me because I will eventually settle in a region where English is taught as a foreign language, in an environment where discrimination against NNESTs may well persist.

*Significance of Proposed Research.* First, with the rise of non-native English speakers in teacher education programs across Canada and more generally North America, it is useful to know foreign-educated teachers' needs and concerns. In fact, Liu (1999) estimates that nearly 40% of teacher trainees enrolled in North American, British, and Australian English-as-a-second-language teaching programs are non-native speakers. Second, NNESTs represent a multitude of experiences, attitudes, languages, cultures, identities, political systems, ages, societies, socio-economic systems, religions, and races. In addition, these teachers might face challenges in Canada, where educational programs are designed for teaching in local contexts. As researchers we can promote research and

discussion about non-native English-speaking professionals and can create opportunities for collaborating and sharing research findings with NNESTs, program administrators, and the general public.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature on NNESTs has spawned debate and discussion in several major areas. These areas include, among other topics: a) second language teacher education; b) preparation of teachers for multicultural classrooms; c) international teaching assistants; and d) NNESTs' credentials and confidence in relation to identity, language usage, culture, accent, and self-image.

A number of NNESTs who came to North America to further their studies have shared their initial experiences. Raised in Sri Lanka, Braine (2004) recounted that being well read on American culture and politics, taught by both local and expatriate British teachers, and having the maturity of a married man did not adequately prepare him for the realities of living in America in the seventies, when he arrived for graduate studies in applied linguistics. Though half of his classmates were experienced NNESTs from Bangladesh, Columbia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Zimbabwe, not all students completed their programs; some had low proficiency levels and were advised to take English language courses at the language centre. Others' studies faltered, or they left their programs. Despite his teaching experiences, Braine was turned down for a tutor position at the university's English language centre, which later hired an inexperienced native English speaker. Even when he did teach in an intensive English program at another university, two students complained loudly enough to be transferred to classes taught by native speakers. Later in his doctoral studies, he collaborated with classmates to form a

journal in a climate where foreign students were expected to complete their programs quickly and quietly and then "disappear for good" (Braine, 2004 p. 12).

Liu (2004), of Chinese background, recalled how he believed that social acceptance as a member of the target culture (American) called for improvements in his "communication skills, [his] mannerism and even [his] appearance" (p. 29). Despite becoming increasingly accepted and in fact being mistaken for Westernized Chinese, he felt negative aspects of his multidimensional social identity. He was considered a show-off and thus increasingly became alienated from the Chinese community. Though he faced a number of obstacles, he went on to become a successful NNEST and recently a plenary speaker at the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) annual convention in Baltimore in 2003.

Zhan (2002), a native from China, recalled that the worst time in his academic career was early in his graduate studies, when he constantly questioned his ability to pursue a professional career as a NNEST. These fears lessened when he became aware of the source of his frustrations: linguistic and cultural barriers. Like other successful NNESTs who voiced their perspectives in published forums (e.g., Kamhi-Stein, Cangarajah, Braine, Liu, Matsuda, Medgyes, Mahboob, Major, de Oliveira, Amin, Zhu, Maum, Lee, Seghayer, Oda), Zhan remedied his problems through active social and academic participation and the sage advice of his mentor-supervisor: "Things take time" (p. 6).

Beynon and Toohey's (1995) study of teaching careers of Canadian university students of Punjabi Sikh and Chinese ancestry highlights the cultural influences (parental views) and structural barriers informing career-making decisions for the two ethnic groups. An Australian study (Cruickshank, Newell & Cole, 2003) revealed a rise in the

number of non-native speakers in their teacher education programs who needed language support in formal spoken and written English.

With the increase of NNESTs in second-language teacher education programs and their uncertain future with regard to employment, it becomes increasingly important to determine the value and significance of the native/non-native speaker dichotomy (Lee, 2004; Davies 2003). Patience, hard work, and determination are important factors highlighting the successes of NNESTs, but barriers continue to exist. Institutional barriers, cultural differences, North American teaching styles, and attitudes toward non-native speakers may discourage or even disqualify non-native speakers from entering teacher education programs or teaching in an ESL setting (Canagarajah, 1999; Braine, 1999, Medgyes, 2001). Freeman and Johnson (1998a) declared that teacher education candidates are unique individuals with unique experiences, skills, and backgrounds:

Drawing on work in general education, teacher educators have come to recognize that teachers are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills. They are individuals who enter teacher education programs with prior experiences, personal values, and beliefs that inform their knowledge about teaching and shape what they do. (p. 401)

The literature on teacher preparation for multicultural classrooms shares two common themes: (a) teachers' respect for a student's heritage language and culture, and (b) education and training in diversity. A problematic issue raised in teacher education concerns the whiteness of teacher education candidates preparing to teach a vastly multicultural student body (Lacina, 2005; Sleeter, 2001).

Using a social justice perspective, Nieto (2000) argued that teacher education programs would succeed when current policies change to reflect social justice, equality, and diversity. These changes include a policy that "all courses need to be infused with content related to diversity.... practicum placements, other field experiences, course assignments, course readings also should reflect support for racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, and other types of diversity" (p. 183). On their admission to colleges of education, Nieto adds that they "might also rethink admissions requirements, giving priority to candidates who are fluent in at least one language other than English..." (p. 183).

Researchers have called for teacher educators to be context-sensitive or have an awareness of the differing backgrounds, desires, and aspirations of their students (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Milambiling, 2001; Sleeter, 2001). For college level instruction, Chaput (2000) stated that it is wrong to believe language teaching is about skills (performance) to the exclusion of content. Chaput advised not "to naively imagine that the most important attributes of a successful language teacher are a native or native-like fluency, lively performance, and a kind and encouraging personality" (p. 4). Chaput's ideal language instructor is an expert in both language and literature, although she believes that it will be difficult to meet both criteria.

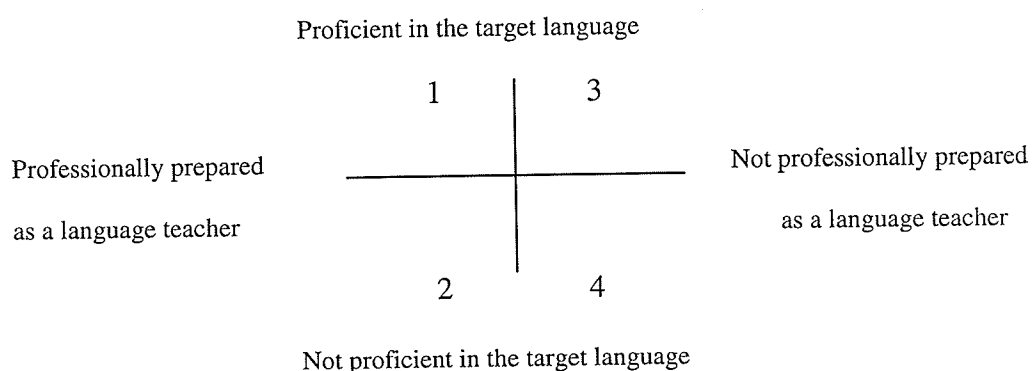
Another view indicates the four fields of knowledge for one to be qualified to teach ESL: pedagogy, methodology, psycholinguistics, and applied linguistics. In addition, familiarity with intercultural and target cultural knowledge would be an asset for the NNEST. Qualifications of the teacher should be considered, not her/his nativity in the English language, for knowing the English language as a native speaker would satisfy

only one aspect of competency (Astor, 2000). Language teaching requires more than an intuitive knowledge of syntax and grammar; rather, teachers should have metalinguistic (e.g., cognitive) knowledge of these elements. Astor states that teachers should be linguistically educated. But we know that teachers, as individuals, stand out not only for their knowledge; a combination of qualities endears certain teachers to us such as interpersonal skills and empathy, among others. The effective language teacher would also have clear pronunciation skills and be comfortable in intercultural contexts.

Bailey (2004) identified two criteria for assessing ESL teachers: professional preparation and language proficiency and both areas, depicted in Figure 1, develop throughout one's life. Non-native speakers can continue to increase their second-language proficiency in the area of vocabulary through reading, studying, and interacting with others. Any teacher can become, "*less* prepared if they do not keep abreast of new research and development in their field of research and are unable to meet students' changing needs" (Bailey & Pasternak, 2004). Certain aspects of language, such as pronunciation, may be difficult to change; however, it may be interesting to study whether students have an inclination to copy the pronunciation and accents of their teachers.

In Bailey's four quadrants depicting target language proficiency and professional preparation, quadrant 1 depicts the most proficient language teachers in relation to having desired qualities, while quadrant 4 shows the least desirable. Quadrants 2 and 3 portray regional needs and limitations. It is better to employ a professionally prepared teacher whose English proficiency is good but not perfect (in quadrant 2), than a native speaker (quadrant 3) who is proficient in the language but has no formal qualifications.

Figure 1. Bailey's continua of target language proficiency and professional preparation



Bailey (2002) has argued that, regardless of language status, all teachers must have both "declarative" knowledge about something and "procedural" knowledge, or the ability to do things. In the language teaching profession, these involve: "a) knowing about the target language (its rules and their exceptions) and knowing how to use the target language; b) knowing culturally appropriate ways of teaching and how to teach with them; and c) knowing about the target culture (norms and taboos) and knowing how to behave appropriately in it" (p.4). Bailey's assertion raises important questions, such as, who can assess the readiness of a NNEST to begin teaching? What about the skills required in helping students move between two cultures and languages? Also, given Bailey's description of an ideal language teacher, can NNEST graduates be deemed qualified to teach upon completing teacher education programs? With respect to employment, in addition to Bailey's (2002) two significant factors of proficiency and professional preparation, Matsuda (1999) added diversity as an asset for teaching staff; this diversity would include a range of international accents, heritage language backgrounds, and cultural backgrounds.

Dialogue journals of non-native speakers in American teacher education programs (Brinton & Holden, 1989) revealed the concerns of preservice teacher trainees. First, practicums were not designed for the non-native-speaker; and no special considerations were in place for their success (Samimy & Brutt-Giffler, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 2004). The classroom culture and setting differed from learning environments in their homeland. Second, some of these teacher trainees were international student visa holders and therefore were expected to return to their countries to teach, though a significant number were planning to immigrate (Brinton, 2004).

Detailed descriptions in the journals of teacher trainees showed deep reflection and devotion to the act of teaching and led Brinton and Holden (1989) to note, "more detailed attention paid...to the basic building blocks of good teaching" (p. 347). Others scholars (Brady & Gulikers, 2004; Richards & Lockhart, 1994) believed that concepts discussed and implemented in teacher education programs might not immediately cross over to the practicum. Rather, NNESTs might lapse into strategies of their own earlier language-learning experiences.

International teaching assistants (ITAs) are another group of NNESTs who face challenges in North American universities. ITAs, whose duties might include lecturing, facilitating or leading discussions, supervising labs, and keeping office hours, were widely believed to be one of the causes of undergraduate students' poor performance, which led to the creation of programs designed to prepare ITAs for classroom teaching (Bailey et al., 1984; Smith et al., 1992). A number of researchers have concluded that sociolinguistic competence (pragmatic and compensatory strategies) was vital in improving ITAs' teaching effectiveness (Bailey 1984; Briggs, 1994; Hoejke & Williams,

1994; Davis, 1991). Oppenheim's (1998) study assessed ITAs' communicative competence by videotaping their teaching performance before and after they participated in a teaching seminar. The findings revealed that passing oral proficiency exams was not solely the best indicator of an effective ITA. Instead, undergraduate students who took part in assessing ITAs ranked the latter's pedagogical and interpersonal skills as more desirable than linguistic competence alone, but said that preservice training for ITAs was not adequate; they needed assistance during their semester-long teaching assignments. One proposal was to link each ITA with an undergraduate buddy (Altinsel & Rittenberg, 1996). But what skills would an undergraduate, and so untrained, buddy need to assist an ITA in better performing his or her duties?

### *Identity*

Researchers have written about NNESTs' professional identity and the forces that influence the shaping of that identity. Identity is manifested in individual differences that are measurable and demonstrable (such as age and sex), objective and ascribed by others, or subjective and ascribed by the self. One's identity may be global and common across cultures, such as with ethnicity; language; culture; relationships (parent, child, friend); and religion. Or one's identity can be particular and culture-specific, such as local (Prairie vs. east coast; rural vs. urban); occupational; institutional (e.g., teacher, student); subcultural (e.g., jock, geek, hippie); or political (liberal, conservative).

In order to understand a NNEST's professional identity, let us examine social identity theory as it pertains to language. According to Tajfel (1978), one's social identity is formed through group membership and is dynamic; that is, an individual may change

his group membership if he no longer feels a part of that group (Tafjel does not mention bringing about change within the group).

Building on Tafjel's social identity theory, Giles and Johnson (1987) presented a theory of social identity based on linguistic features of group membership. This theory sees individuals assimilate into groups based on how well they adapt to the linguistic features of the group. There are four main developments in any intergroup relationships: social categorization, an awareness of a social identity, comparison to others' social identity, and the discovery of one's uniqueness. For social categorization, an individual may learn through behavioural and linguistic cues about what will give him membership to a particular group or leave him outside a particular group. In the case of a non-native-speaking teacher trainee, their identity construction as a minority teacher, based on their non-native status and on competing with white teacher trainees, may prevent them from fully participating in teacher education programs and from considering themselves as effective future teachers.

Davies, in his revised book on the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers, states that all characteristics of a native speaker, with the exception of early childhood exposure, are "contingent" (Davies, 2003). He added that, though linguists and language teachers refer to the native speaker as a reference point and benchmark as a language user, non-native speakers might gain membership into the native-speaker domain through "confidence and identity." Therefore a NNEST's professional identity might be developed through English language improvement and language pedagogy improvement (Noranda, 2003; Bailey, 2002) as well as attention to the development of their confidence and identity as ESL teachers.

Ethnic or linguistic discrimination might appear in the classroom well after a NNEST secures a teaching position. Amin (1997), a Pakistani Canadian, concluded from her pilot study that people from the western Anglo-Saxon English-speaking areas of the developed world, such as Canada, America, and Britain, are held in higher esteem than those with accents associated with non-Western countries, such as Singapore, India, and Kenya. In describing her teaching experiences in Toronto, she related that even though there is no evidence of a link between race and language ability, her students made her feel disempowered because she was not considered an authentic Canadian (white) teacher.

### *Cultural Knowledge and the NNEST*

One key challenge to the competency of NNEST teachers of ESL is their knowledge of the assumed target culture. Yet as conceptions of the target cultures shift, so do the understandings of NNEST cultural competencies. Culture and language teaching have gained much recognition in recent years.

Atkinson (1999) challenges six basic principles of culture: All humans are individuals; individuality is also cultural; social group membership and identity are multiple, contradictory, and dynamic; social group membership is consequential; methods of studying cultural knowledge and behaviour are unlikely to fit a positivist paradigm; and language (learning and teaching) and culture are mutually implicated, but culture is multiple and complex. He argued that it is difficult to propose a definition of culture because of a tendency to reduce individuals to "their cultural types" (p. 641). Instead, he proposed that culture is continually changing and "radically in need of redefining and reconceptualizing" (p. 649). He cited M. K. Gandhi's action of nonviolent

resistance as showing individuality in a culture or the capacity of human beings to solve their own problems in creative ways (see Atkinson, 1999, for discussion).

In her study of incidental displays of cultural knowledge, Lazarton (2004) examined two NNESTs in their extensive English program classroom. She questioned the context of cultural topics that arise in the class and the ways in which NNESTs demonstrate their understandings of them. She argued that the issue is not so much about what cultural information teachers possess, but rather what teachers do when they do or do not possess cultural information. Although she claimed that this situation offered the opportunity for students in the class to be "cultural informants" and that the teacher can simply state that they do not know, a NNEST may believe that not knowing will be equated with being ignorant or stupid. Can adult second-language education programs be sufficiently long to give the NNEST some time to gain cultural information in the target culture? Kramsch (1995) noted that, "in practice, teachers teach language and culture, or culture in language, but not language as culture" (p. 83).

In spite of gains in intercultural and multicultural research, much language teaching operates on the premise that language and culture are separate entities. Learners receive language instruction on formal structures and universal speech function, with the assumption that transmission of cultural knowledge follows naturally. As Kramsch (1995) argues, "Culture is incorporated only to the extent that it reinforces and enriches, not that it questions, traditional boundaries of self and other" (p. 89). She further explained that in today's societies it is hard to pigeonhole people into particular linguistic, social, and cultural groups. This constraint is quite evident in the Canadian multicultural

context, where members from different linguistic, ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds collaborate in a variety of contexts.

If English is considered a global language, then it behooves all teachers to teach from a variety of cultural perspectives—perspectives of the local language, perspectives of the different ethnic backgrounds in the classroom, and perspectives of the teacher—when the need arises. NNESTs may lack specific knowledge of local cultures (in Canada, if they are from abroad), but they have enhanced: a) intercultural knowledge; b) knowledge of the expanding contexts into which English is spreading; and c) even their local knowledge increases rapidly as they teach and learn in a second-language setting.

### *Accent*

Issues of accent have been a major source of employment discrimination in both developed and developing countries. Lippi-Green's (1997) study confirmed that teachers with non-native accents were deemed less qualified and less effective than their native-speaking colleagues. Native speakers were considered more competent than those who spoke international varieties of English, such as Nigerian or Indian English (Canagarajah, 1999). Kachru (1985) listed countries of the "Inner Circle"—Australia, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand, and United States—as being perceived as having ideal pronunciation. Lippi-Green referred to this questioning of a teacher's ability and credibility based on her/his accent as a form of linguistic discrimination.

In reporting accent discrimination in the Canadian context, Munro (2003) reported that although accented speech might require some effort by the listener to understand, it is false to presume that a strong accent is indicative of reduced intelligibility. Several

human rights cases against employers and landlords have alleged discrimination because of the petitioners' perceived deficits in communication.

A Polish substitute teacher working for the Surrey school district in Surrey, British Columbia, won a human rights case against his employers because they denied him work on account of his accent. It is noted that this teacher was a competent math and physics teacher, who previously taught in Quebec, and that he had received satisfactory evaluations. The issue in this case was about intelligibility, since the teacher possessed satisfactory knowledge in the subject matter.

### *Self-Image*

Reaves and Medgyes' (1994) empirical study considered three hypotheses about the NEST-NNEST issue in an international setting. They surveyed 216 teachers (172 women, 44 men) from several countries—Hungary, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, Sweden, Yugoslavia, and Zimbabwe—to examine the following hypotheses: a) there are differences between NEST and NNEST teaching behaviours; b) the differences are largely due to NESTs' and NNESTs' divergent levels of language proficiency; and c) the awareness of the differences in language proficiency influences NNEST's self-perception and teaching attitudes.

The researchers discovered that two thirds of the participants reported differences in teaching behaviour between the two groups. NNESTs were more concerned with accuracy, were more often in doubt about appropriate language use, and overused formal registers, as they are not very familiar with colloquial English. The order of difficulties encountered by NNESTs was first with vocabulary (especially in the areas of idiom and

appropriateness), then speaking skills and fluency, then pronunciation and grammar.

Grammar, as noted by the NNESTs, was a favourite aspect of language teaching due to its being arbitrary and orderly. It can be concluded from this study that the awareness of the differences in teaching styles between NESTs and NNESTs affects their general self-image and attitude to their work.

Samimy and Brutt-Giffler (1999) replicated Medgyes' study by interviewing 17 non-native-speaking graduate students in American MA or PhD programs in TESOL. Students from Korea, Turkey, China, Burkina-Faso, Surinam, Japan, and Russia, who were considered to be sophisticated users of English, participated in the study. Russia was the only country that overlapped with Medgyes' study. Researchers discovered that the participants' self-images were positive and that the latter did not believe that native speakers were superior to non-native speakers.

In a teacher-recredentialing program at the University of Ottawa, Mawhinney and Xu (1997) identified areas of concern in foreign-trained teachers. The concerns included the teachers' speaking with accents, developing a sense of belonging to the profession, being viewed as different, developing professional relationships, and reconstructing a professional identity. The researchers found that the teachers' accented English resulted in constant questioning of their validity as teachers, which affected their self-esteem and made an impact on their professional development and the reconstruction of their teaching identities. It is a question of what credentialing programs can and cannot do in training teachers to work in Canada.

Both the 1994 and 1997 studies referred to above demonstrate that the higher qualified teacher probably faces fewer language difficulties in the use of English. It can

also be assumed that the better trained a teacher is, the more self-confident they are likely to be in the classroom; however, even if NNESTs are highly trained, they may feel less capable or be more critical about their linguistic and pedagogical shortcomings when working alongside a native speaker.

A significant development in English language training has been the increasing number of NNESTs entering master's-in-TESOL programs in the United States, which may also be the case for Canada (Johnson, 2001). Programs that were designed for native speakers are now being reassessed to accommodate the inclusion of non-native speakers. Some scholars state that though Western-based TESOL programs are not fully prepared to handle their specific concerns (Brinton, 2004; Brady & Gulikers, 2004; Samimy & Brutt-Giffler), it is equally challenging to design a program to suit the needs of a diverse group of teachers.

The TESOL organization's facilitation of the NNEST caucus provides a platform to address their perspectives. The caucus addresses a variety of issues, including discriminatory sentiments cited by NNESTs, such as race and identity issues (e.g., Amin, 2004). Recent issues focused on identity themes, such as the impact of a NNEST in the English-as-a-second-language classroom, a NNEST's professional journey, a NNEST's professional self-discovery, and testimonials from NNESTs working in the field. Attention is also given to employment and legal matters. However, contributions to the newsletter need to address the qualification and retraining concerns of foreign-trained teachers. At a TESL 2002 panel discussion in Manitoba on the native-speaker/non-native-speaker dichotomy, one administrator in the audience asserted that she would refuse to

hire a NNEST if the teacher's speech could not be understood, but she did not say how comprehensibility could be measured.

In the English language centre of a Canadian university, students may complain that the language teacher is not qualified because of their perception that an effective language teacher in a Western country ought to be a white, Anglo-Saxon individual. Student perceptions may be shaped by their language-learning experiences in their homeland and by their expectations in a second-language setting. Administrators in Canadian language institutions that are financially dependent on student fees may have to walk on a tightrope to maintain standards and satisfy the preferences of students. Yet in our daily exchanges with multicultural Canadians—the teachers, doctors, specialists, neighbours, and store clerks—we are used to communicating in a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic society.

How can we assure the level of teacher competence in the knowledge and proficiency of the language? Chiasson (2002) reports that the New Brunswick government's (2001) policy outlined minimum requirements and qualifications for second-language programs and second-language teachers. Due to the popularity of French immersion programs and to not having enough native teachers to teach, non-native speakers of varying proficiency levels from public schools and universities were asked to teach in the program. As an incentive, the province offered bursaries for methodology retraining, which both native and non-native speakers of French were eligible to receive. This policy has validated the non-native speakers' right to be second-language educators. From the government's actions and policy changes, we can conclude

that professionalism and expertise are two of the most important criteria in evaluating a second-language teacher's ability to teach.

### *Conclusion*

Research on NNESTs addresses a number of issues regarding their unique challenge to establish themselves as professionals in North America, even as their representation in teacher education programs continues to increase. NNEST professionals are recruited by Canada from the professional classes of immigrants (Amin, 2001), while an increasing number of locally educated native speakers are seeking employment overseas for financial gain and adventure. This exodus has left a void in English-language-training professionals in Canadian institutions, where the teaching personnel may be drawn from NNESTs.

Adult second-language teacher education programs, offering focused pedagogy and instruction in second-language training, are attracting non-native speakers; yet graduates of such programs face an uncertain future due to a variety of reasons and variables. The literature highlights some of the difficulties non-native speakers have faced and the gaps between their pursuit of professional preparation and the reality of embarking on career paths for which they have trained.

## Chapter Three: The Study

### *Objectives*

To explore NNESTs' professional self-image and confidence as they pursued teacher education programs in Canada, this study addresses the following research questions: a) how confident are NNESTs who study in Western English-as-second-language teacher

education programs?; b) what factors contribute to their self-image as future ESL teachers?; and c) how might teacher education programs foster better self-image and professional identity for all preservice English-as-second-language teachers?

Among six topics for the specific questions posed to participants, 30 sub-questions asked participants to provide their thoughts in more detail. I added the question "What made you participate in this study?" before I gave them the questionnaire to fill out, for two reasons. I was curious to know their intentions for participating in the study, and I wanted to know how they felt about being called a NNEST for this study.

I define the term "self-image" using Rosenberg's (1965) definition, cited in Mruk (1999):

The evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself. It expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. In short, it is a personal judgment of worthiness expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself. It is a subjective experience which the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and other overt expressive behaviour (pp. 4-5).

While identity has many fixed and changeable characteristics, such as age, sex, nationality, relationship, and global and local characteristics, self-image is a subjective and personal judgment of one's self (identity) and can change depending on the context.

### *Theoretical Framework*

Fairclough's (1995) work demonstrates that language creates identity based on the differential power of discourses. He argued that educational systems teach Standard English through transmission, "based around the hegemony of a particular dialect, but in a way which overcomes on the surface the contemporary dilemma of how to do that while making the politically necessary concessions to liberalism and pluralism" (p. 242).

Fairclough critiques the "appropriateness" model of language variation on two major points. First, he regards the ideal image of sociolinguistic order as failing to take into account the many tensions, variations, and diversity in today's society. Second, and in more general terms, he believes that appropriateness conjures up the notion of "hegemonic objective and ideal." Although he cautions learners not to adopt "oppositional practices" that would marginalize them, he suggests that learners of Standard English, or any language, "should exercise critical language awareness (CLA) of the sociolinguistic order" (p. 252). With this suggestion he calls for critical writers, readers, speakers, and listeners to understand and "appreciate the possibility, advantages, and risks of critical, creative, and emancipatory practice as effective elements in building citizenship within a language domain" (p. 252).

### *Methodology*

Twelve participants aged 25 to 55, from South Korea, Singapore, Japan, China, Ukraine, Jordan, Fiji Islands, Cyprus, Vietnam, and Taiwan, in various programs (CTESL, TESL, and Master's degree in education) volunteered their participation. Seven participants were international students, two were landed immigrants, and three were Canadian citizens.

They filled out a closed and open questionnaire (see Appendix A), with an opportunity to respond to fixed questions in an open mike fashion (see Appendix E). Six participants attended a focus group session to discuss the questionnaire (see Appendix F). The Fijian student was in a TESL program in British Columbia, and she participated by phone and fax.

Ten participants had at least one year of teaching English in private schools in their home countries, and some had tutoring experience. Farrah is a trained elementary teacher, and Reema taught English in university. The Research Ethics Board and the administrators of each program granted permission for me to call for participants. Volunteer non-native speakers were asked to sign an informed consent form (see Appendix B). The questionnaire included elements from various studies: Medgyes (1992), Medgyes and Reeves (1994), Samimy and Brutt-Giffler's (1999) follow-up study of the self-image of NNESTs in international and American settings, and Johnson's (2001) study on the social identities of NNEST TESOL students in an American master's degree program.

I analyzed the data using Jun Liu's three stages of the dilemmas he faced through a continuum of professional development: puzzlement, endeavour, and empowerment. In the puzzlement stage he was a newly arrived international graduate student who faced culture shock and pragmatic incompetence. In the endeavour stage of Liu's "adaptive cultural transformation," during which he tried to fit into the academic and social environment, he wrestled with dual identities: his Chinese ethnic background, habits, and beliefs; and his greater participation in the American communities. In the third phase he

came to terms with his identity through achieving his academic goals and using his earlier experiences to help other non-native-speaker students.

### *Description of Teacher Education Programs*

A number of teacher education programs are offered at the University of Manitoba with some overlap. Both the Certificate in Teaching English as Second Language (CTESL) program and Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) academic program offer second-language teacher education. Although the courses are similar in both programs, the CTESL program is part of the Continuing Education (ConEd) Department while the TESL program is an academic program in the Faculty of Education. The two programs collaborate sharing instructors and students, at least in basic 100 level courses; also, ConEd offers a certificate for students in the TESL program who complete the equivalent coursework to their CTESL program.

The course numbers are different: CTESL courses are numbered in the 300s, while in the Faculty of Education the TESL programs courses are numbered in the 100, 500, or 700 levels. To take the courses at the 100 level, a student must be enrolled in the academic programs of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) or the Post-Baccalaureate Degree Education (PBDE). To take courses at the 500 level they must be enrolled in the PBDE or Master's degree in Education (M.Ed), and for 700 level courses they must be admitted to the M.Ed degree program with appropriate pre-requisites. The TESL Canada certificate is administered nationally, and is granted when students present the CTESL certificate and evidence of a bachelor's degree and membership in a TESL Canada affiliate organization.

The three main objectives of the TESL second-language teacher education courses are to "discuss the theoretical basis of second-language instruction; demonstrate a variety of effective ESL teaching techniques; and explain, in pedagogically relevant ways, the linguistic structures of the English language" (University of Manitoba 2005/2006 calendar). In the CTESL certificate program there are five 40-hr courses (four compulsory and one elective). The compulsory courses include (1) Principles and Procedures of Second-Language Teaching, (2) Teaching ESL Vocabulary and Pronunciation, (3) Teaching ESL Grammar, (4) a 40-hr practicum. Of the three elective 40-hr courses available, one is specifically designed for the NNEST: English for NNS (non-native-speaking) teachers of ESL. Native speakers are excluded from taking this elective, which focuses on the NNS teacher, classroom, and professional English. These same courses can be taken by students in the B.Ed program for which they will be given a certificate. Likewise, students in the PBDE program will be awarded the certificate for 100 or 500 level equivalents.

The Master's degree is a research-oriented graduate studies program and will not enable students to become practising professionals in public schools unless they also hold a B.Ed. The TESL program in the M.Ed program offers more advanced research and theory-related required courses at the 700 level. Some of the courses are as follows: (1) Seminar in English as a Second Language in Research and Practice, (2) Research Issues and Applications in Teaching English as a Second Language, (3) Theory and Research in Second-Language Acquisition.

In Canada, the aim of most undergraduate teacher education is to be of service to local teachers and local contexts. Since there is no federal jurisdiction for K-12

education, each province sets its own guidelines and standards concerning curriculum, courses, and practica. Teachers transferring credentials from one province to another are treated case by case; in fact, some teachers may need to take additional courses to satisfy provincial requirements. For adult ESL education, certification standards have been set by the national professional body, TESL Canada; however, recognition of these standards is still largely voluntary and dependent on employer (including provincial and government) acceptance.

Included in this study, for contrast, are the experiences of a paraprofessional who, for personal reasons, did not pursue the option of teacher education when it was available to her in the late 1970s. Given that some foreign-trained teachers become teaching assistants (TAs) in the K-S4 (12) system in Manitoba, and given that some of the responsibilities of teaching ESL learners are delegated to these TAs, I felt it important to include at least one participant in this category. Presently she works as a teaching assistant in the K-12 public school system. This study does not examine such teacher education programs or their instructors.

### *Data Collection*

Four instruments were used to collect data. First, participants were given a sheet of paper, pencil, and coloured markers and asked to draw themselves in a future teaching scenario. I used the following prompts: "Imagine yourself teaching sometime in the future, after completing your teacher-training program. Where are you teaching? Who are you teaching? What does your classroom look like?" They were asked to label the drawing and furnish two paragraphs describing their drawing, elaborating on these

phrases: "An effective teacher is \_\_\_\_\_," and "I see myself as a teacher who\_\_\_\_\_."

Second, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire that asked their personal information, education background, teaching experiences, linguistic proficiency, perceptions about completing this program and future employment prospects.

Third, the participants were invited to record any additional thoughts or comments they had about their unique circumstances. I gave the participants 15 min to talk into a microphone and answer the following question: Do you have any further thoughts about any of the following as it relates to your own situation: (a) the questionnaire, (b) credentialing, and (c) other concerns or thoughts? I read the whole question first, then let the participants respond (see Appendix E).

Participants were reminded that their anonymity would be maintained throughout this entire study. At no time would their identities be made public or published in any part of this study. Therefore they were asked to select a pseudonym and use this chosen name consistently throughout the study.

The final data collection technique was in the format of a focus group. Once the other data collection techniques were completed (see Appendix F), all participants were invited, as a group, to discuss the topic at hand: NNEST teacher education. The forum provided a platform for NNESTs to listen to their colleagues' experiences of being a NNEST and aspiring to become a teacher in Canada. I wrote the following four questions on the board, read the questions aloud and then started the discussion with the first question. The four questions are as follows: a) how confident are you in becoming a successful teacher in Canada?; b) if you are not yet pursuing credentialing, what will

facilitate your becoming a teacher in Canada?; c) how, if at all, will this study affect your future decision-making about achieving your professional goals?; and d) are there other questions or concerns you would like to address in this meeting?

I examined the drawings and accompanying descriptive paragraphs, using Feldman's (1970) process for responding to visual art, to record how the participants envision their future role as teachers. Feldman offers four stages of examining art: description; analysis (e.g., size, colour, texture, shape, and surface relationships); interpretation (e.g., "looks like," "feels like"); and judgment. My interpretations were sent to the participants for feedback.

The 15-min open microphone session at the end of the questionnaire began with an open-ended question: "Do you have any further thoughts about the questionnaire, credentialing, or your own particular situation of becoming a teacher in Canada?" I transcribed the notes and added the participants' responses to their questionnaires. As a group, NNESTs were asked four open-ended questions, which emerged from their participation in this study. The group sat in a circle, and everyone had a chance to participate; participants were able to respond to each other's responses in the discussion. Eight participants came to the meeting, but only six participated in the focus group session. The meeting was not recorded, but participants came up with a list of suggestions.

I added the list of suggestions from the focus group to the suggestions listed on the questionnaires. I correlated the questionnaire responses, the drawings, and the interviews to gauge the overall level of confidence, but I also sent each participant a preliminary report to verify my assessment of their self-image.

### *Limitations of the Study*

This exploratory study probes into a new area of research. I cast as wide a net as possible to gain both qualitative and quantitative information, but realized that some of the decisions that at the time were made for sound reasons did not get the information I was trying to procure. Consequently there are some limitations in this study, which I will address below.

"Recredentialing": I used this term throughout my thesis proposal, the call for participants, and the questionnaire. My initial goal was to examine foreign-educated teachers who had foreign teaching credentials and whose career goals would include recredentialing or recertification as teachers in Canada. However, as the data suggests, the majority of NNESTs had on-the-job training in private schools in their homeland, in spite of the fact that most countries now have K-12 teacher certification programs not unlike our programs in Canada in duration and depth. Like Canada, uncertified people can't teach readily in the public schools in many of these countries, but language-training schools have hired them as uncertified teachers, as is common both here and abroad. So the certification struggles of the participants are similar to the certification struggles of all adult ESL teachers. Their unique challenges arise more from the fact that they are NNESTs and less familiar with the Canadian cultural context.

Questionnaire: The major source of data gathering was in the form of a questionnaire, which was designed to extract personal and professional information from the participants. Pilot study: While the questionnaire did help obtain much information by economizing time, effort, and resources, it would have been wise to pilot the study. This study was not piloted, but could have greatly benefited by a trial run of the questionnaire.

I provided participants numerous options for selection and space for them to give their own responses. This prompting could be seen as leading participants or directing them to a particular frame of thought. Also, I could have included scales and had the participants rank the gradations of importance of the scales, so that some of the more important and pressing issues for the participants were separated from the least pressing concerns.

Some of the questions were not phrased consistently with other questions asked. Question 1 should have asked participants an open-ended question, under a different category, about the benefits and obstacles (if any) experienced as a non-native-speaking teacher trainee in Canada. For question 2, the heading for this question should have been written asking for personal experiences rather than in the third-person objective: for example, "How does the ethnic or linguistic self-image of NNESTs affect decision-making concerning their entering or recredentialing in the teaching profession?" Question 4, "What is your professional image of a good teacher and your possibilities of becoming one?", should have read, "In your opinion, what are the attributes of an effective teacher?". In question 5 the subquestion (f), "How do you regard yourself as a non-native speaker of English?", should have read, "How do you regard yourself as a NNEST?", so that it would be oppositional to the preceding question, "How do you regard the average non-native-speaking teacher?". Also, subquestion (h), "Have you ever been told by family members or friends that you cannot teach in Canada because you have deficiencies in the following areas...?", should have included "or received a professional opinion from an advisor, employer, or instructor...." Question 6 asked participants to mention educational supports they would like to see as teacher trainees. Some participants wrote up to nine suggestions, while a few participants wrote one or "not

sure." I added these supports from the questionnaire to the list drawn up by participants in the focus group session.

Six participants attended the focus group session, and among them 2 participants were more vocal than the others. The meeting was not recorded, so the information from the focus group generated only a few points. Therefore the supports stated may be lopsided and not represent all participants. Further, a lack of generalizability and reliability comes from the small and non-representative sample size, so caution should be taken that the information presented in this study might not be generalized to all NNESTs.

Defining culture is difficult, and using "culture" in my questionnaire opens up many issues. In asking participants about culture or cultural issues, I could have specified whether I was talking about Canadian culture or multicultural issues, not to mention many other issues emanating from this multifaceted topic, such as linguistic nuances. Even within ethnic groups there are diversity and differences of opinions and perspectives in decision-making.

As a beginner researcher, I learned the process of research by doing the research. I discovered that however much planning is done beforehand, one learns a lot about one's data collection techniques through actual data collection and analysis. A Lickert scale, ranking important to least important items, would have been beneficial for gathering quantitative information to strengthen qualitative studies on Canada-wide studies of NNESTs, but Lickert scales also present certain limitations as well.

## Chapter Four: Findings

### *Overview*

The objective of this section is to present the data from the questionnaire: a) differences between NESTs and NNESTs in terms of employability, strengths, weaknesses, and teaching style; b) the ethnic or linguistic self-image of NNESTs in decision-making about their credentialing; c) their views about establishing or re-establishing themselves as professionals in Canada; d) their perceptions of what makes a good teacher; e) the challenges, if any, they face in establishing themselves as professionals in Canada; and f) how credentialing programs might foster better self-image and professional identity for preservice English-as-a-second-language teachers. Although I have used the term "recredentialing" extensively in the questionnaire, my findings and discussion looked at NNESTs seeking credentialing or recredentialing (as teaching professionals) in TESL credentialing programs.

When I posted a call for participants (see Appendix D), I was initially looking for foreign-trained teachers who were seeking certification of their credentials to work in Canada. Unfortunately, no participants in this category came forward. Upon hearing that there were non-native speakers in the CTESL and TESL programs; however, I decided to target participants from these two programs for my study. There are two implications for this change of focus. First, the findings revealed that out of 12 participants, 10 did not have the prior education and training to apply for teacher certification in Canada, but they considered themselves teachers because they had taught English at private language institutions. While all participants are referred to as "NNESTs" throughout this thesis, they are a mixed group of individuals with diverse backgrounds who share two

similarities: a) each participant has had at least one year of "on-the-job" teaching English experience in his or her homeland; and b) they desire to learn Canadian adult ESL methodology. The second implication is that participants in these two programs are from different programs of study: master's degree programs, post-baccalaureate diploma programs, and TESL and CTESL certificate programs. Not all participants may well become second language teachers upon completion of their programs, and much will depend on where they decide to live (in Canada or overseas) and what goals they set upon completing their studies. The fact that some of the participants responded that they were not very confident may be attributed to a realization that Canadian second language teacher education standards were more demanding in terms of language proficiency, skills of elocution and Canadian cultural knowledge than their prior expectations. (See limitations for more information)

Throughout this section I use a number of terms such as "the participants," "these NNESTs," and "the respondents" interchangeably to refer to the participants. Although all of the participants know two or more languages, which both this researcher and the reader may appreciate and admire, my reference to the native speakers and non-native speakers is strictly as speakers of the English language.

Table 1: Participants

| Participant | Country of origin | Status in Canada      | Career goals                                                                |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jennifer    | Singapore         | International student | Teach ESL to international students and children                            |
| John        | China             | International student | ESL instructor                                                              |
| Nadia       | Kuwait            | Landed immigrant      | Teach ESL to adult immigrant students                                       |
| Jane        | Japan             | International student | Complete a master's program in education.                                   |
| Jack        | China             | International student | Will do a master's degree in English, then teach English                    |
| Sonya       | Korea             | International student | Teach English to immigrants                                                 |
| Denise      | Ukraine           | Canadian citizen      | Teach adult ESL                                                             |
| Reema       | Cyprus            | Canadian citizen      | College/university ESL instructor<br>2. Teach ESL/work with immigrant women |
| Charles     | Taiwan            | International student | Teach English to new immigrants                                             |
| Farrah      | Fiji Islands      | Landed immigrant      | Teach ESL to adults                                                         |
| Lisa        | Singapore         | International student | Study a master's degree in English before working                           |
| Min         | Vietnam           | Canadian citizen      | None stated                                                                 |

**Table 2:** A summary of the participants

| NNEST name | Age | Degree | Teaching specialty | Contact with NESTs | Contact with NNESTs | Years of teaching experience | Years in Canada | Program or work     |
|------------|-----|--------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Jennifer   | 26  | BA     | English            | R                  | S                   | 1                            | 2               | TESL                |
| John       | 26  | BA     | English            | R                  | F                   | 2                            | 2               | C-TESL              |
| Nadia      | 32  | BA     | English            | R                  | D                   | 7                            | 2               | TESL                |
| Jane       | 43  | BA     | English            | S                  | D                   | 18                           | 1               | C-TESL              |
| Jack       | 25  | BSc    | Economics          | S                  | F                   | 1.5                          | 3               | C-TESL              |
| Sonya      | 31  | BA     | English            | S                  | S                   | 2                            | 3               | TESL                |
| Denise     | 47  | BA     | English            | S                  | S                   | 2                            | 10              | TESL                |
| Reema      | 36  | MEd    | English            | S                  | D                   | 12                           | 4               | None                |
| Charles    | 26  | BA     | English            | R                  | F                   | 1                            | 3               | TESL                |
| Farrah     | 40  | BA     | English            | S                  | F                   | 15                           | 5               | TESL                |
| Lisa       | 30  | BA     | English            | R                  | S                   | 1                            | 3               | TESL                |
| Min        | 55  | BA     | English            | F                  | D                   | 5                            | 24              | TA in public school |

R= Rare

S=Sometimes

F=Frequently

D= Daily

Table 3: Confidence levels of NNESTs at the time of interview

| NNEST's name | Not very confident | Confident | Very confident |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Jennifer     |                    | X         |                |
| John         |                    | X         |                |
| Nadia        |                    |           | X              |
| Jane         | X                  |           |                |
| Jack         |                    | X         |                |
| Sonya        | X                  |           |                |
| Denise       |                    |           | X              |
| Reema        |                    | X         |                |
| Charles      | X                  |           |                |
| Farrah       |                    |           | X              |
| Lisa         | X                  |           |                |
| Min          |                    | X         |                |

### *Participant Responses*

*Jennifer.* Jennifer, a 26-year-old woman and bilingual teacher, was raised in Singapore where English is an official language. She started learning English in elementary school. She frequently spoke English at school, but only sometimes at home and outside of home and school. After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, she taught English to elementary level students for a year in a private school before her family moved to Canada.

Jennifer considers both her spoken and written English to be at an advanced level. She had very little contact with NESTs in her homeland, but sometimes she had contact with NNESTs at university and the private school. In Canada, her career goals included teaching ESL to international students. The TESL program was Jennifer's first coursework in teacher education. She needed to complete two more courses before finishing the program.

Jennifer responded to a call for participants when I entered her TESL class and asked students whether anyone would like to participate in my study. I later asked her what made her participate in this study, and she responded, " Because I am not a native speaker of English." Jennifer mentioned that one benefit of being a NNEST from a country where

English is an official language is that it helped her in the settlement process in Canada. She stated, "In Canada people do things differently than in my country. I feel that knowing English from my country helped me to settle in Canada with few problems" (notes, p. 1.1). Even though she considered her written and oral expression to be advanced, she wrote that she was concerned about her accent and pronunciation whenever she spoke to people: "I feel a big difference in my accent and pronunciation. People do not understand me right away. I look at their faces, and I know that they don't understand me. Sometimes I have to repeat what I say because of the looks on their faces" (notes, p. 1.1).

Jennifer did not undergo formal teacher education in her homeland in order to teach English in a private school there. She did not see the need for this training because she learned to teach while teaching, and because an undergraduate degree was the main criterion for her being hired in her homeland.

She discovered how important it is to have teacher education prior to entering the classroom from the TESL program. She learned a lot from the TESL program, with effective lesson planning being one of the most important aspects of retraining. This training, she believes, will be important in securing employment in Canada. Jennifer said that without this training in Canada she would not have felt confident about finding a job. Now she believes she understands the Canadian education system a little better because of the way the TESL course is taught. She became aware of her deficiencies after beginning the TESL program and being with more experienced classmates. She believes that she needs to enhance her professional image. Moreover, Jennifer believes that special considerations should be given to NNESTS in any teacher education program; however,

she would not appreciate being called or "labelled" a NNEST by the teacher or other students.

Jennifer prefers an even number of native and non-native speaker teachers in teacher education programs because she sees benefits to both kinds of speakers: "I think that it's important to maintain a balance of native and non-native speakers, so we could learn from each other in all aspects" (notes, p.1.2).

Jennifer believes that the average NNEST is competent, and she has described herself as a confident speaker of English. She had this to say about what affects her confidence level: "I think three things affect my confidence level: my ability to understand English, my willingness to accept failure and success, and my ability to adapt" (notes, p. 1.3). Jennifer has supportive family and friends who have never told her that she has traits that would discourage her from teaching in Canada. The deficiencies she has described are from her own perceptions, based on her reading of others' body language and facial expressions. As a preservice English-as-a-second-language teacher, Jennifer made three suggestions which she believes would further help her meet her professional goals in Canada: support from more experienced ESL teachers, more opportunities to continue her professional goals, and help in securing employment.

Drawing assignment: In Jennifer's class there are 18 students. Jennifer is standing next to the chalkboard; she is standing at the blackboard. The students are sitting at their tables in pairs. There is a large tree behind the chalkboard. She has labelled her drawing an "open-aired teaching environment." She states:

An effective teacher is a person who likes to teach. She is responsible and a hard worker. She understands her students, and she works hard to teach them what they need to know. She knows how to motivate her students, and she prepares interesting lesson plans. She has lots of activities for students in every class.

I see myself as a teacher who will work hard to motivate my students. I will prepare effective lesson plans with lots of activities. My students will see that my classroom is very interesting. I will have lots of charts on the walls, and I will make my classroom inviting. My beliefs come from reading an article about HIV children in Thailand when I was in junior high school. I want to work with children in the future because I feel happy around children." ( notes, p. 1.13)

*John.* John is a 26-year-old man, a trilingual teacher from China, where English is considered a foreign language. He learned English from age 18 in private schools and completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. After university he taught and tutored English for 2 years before coming to Canada. At first he planned to study for a master's degree, but chose instead to study the certificate program in teaching English. John considers his written English to be advanced and his proficiency in speech native-like. John rarely used English at home, but once he started to learn English, he would sometimes use it in school and outside of the home environment. John had occasional contacts with native-English-speaking tourists who asked for directions and opinions (e.g., "Which restaurant is better?"). Most of his English teacher colleagues were NNESTS, and he tried hard to use English at work.

John is in the first course of the CTESL program. It is also his first course in second-language teacher education. Although he had no formal teacher education, he learned to

teach "on the job" at a private school. The most important factor that allowed to him to teach was his knowledge of English. In Canada he would like to work as an ESL instructor upon completing the program. In comparing his teaching in his homeland and in Canada, he remarked that the program in Canada emphasized different kinds of activities for students, and these activities make learning fun for both the student and teacher. This element was missing in his training back home.

John responded to my call for participants in the CTESL class. When later I asked him what made him participate in my study, he stated that his NNEST friend in the same class encouraged him to participate. One of the benefits John discovered in being a NNEST in Canada is the positive effect on the ESL student to know that the teacher is also a language learner. He stated, "There is strength in terms of understanding how the students feel. What are the difficulties that the student might encounter?" (notes, p. 2.1).

A challenge for John is in vying for jobs with native speakers. He feels that the native speaker will be chosen over him because of their native command of English. John also feels that things are pretty even as far as education is concerned, but the true picture of his employability will emerge once he completes the program: "Canada is multicultural, but I think that they prefer native speakers to teach English; I don't know. I am training with native speakers, and we both can be good teachers" (notes, p. 2.1). John became a teacher because of his degree in English. At first he did not see the need for retraining, on account of his teaching experience. However, once he began his first CTESL course, he saw the need for the retraining because of the course delivery: "I don't think that they really teach you to teach back home. All teaching strategies [I have] learned are from this CTESL course" (notes, p. 2.4).

John believes that special attention should be given to NNESTs in preservice English-as-a-second-language programs in order to help them re-establish themselves as professionals in Canada. When asked what kind of teachers he would prefer to have in his second-language teacher education programs, John preferred all native speakers. "I prefer all native speakers because only they can model the language in a natural way" (notes, p. 2.8).

John believes the average NNEST is competent. He is very confident of his English proficiency. This proficiency, he believes, is due to the positive interaction that he has experienced between the teacher and his fellow classmates. With regard to friends and family members, John has always felt supported by family members and friends in his career goals; however, he feels others may discriminate against him because of his ethnicity, first-language background, and writing abilities. His response is that these are parts of who he is. "These are facts of life, and I cannot change them. If I came to Canada at a young age, I probably would not have had these concerns. I feel proud that I have come this far because there are other students like me with similar goals" (notes, p. 2.10).

Drawing assignment: John has drawn a classroom with the blackboard the width of the rows of desks. On the board is written: "Welcome to my class." To the left of the classroom is a rectangular table with a stereo, a projector, text, and teaching materials. John is wearing a long-sleeved shirt, a vest, and pants. He is standing in front of the blackboard and addressing the class. He says:

Being an effective teacher is to have a good knowledge of what the teacher is trying to teach: someone who is approachable, open-minded, has a lot of passion in helping the students to learn, and someone who will assist students to accomplish their

goals. A teacher is someone who will help students to achieve their maximum potential and create a relaxing, positive environment. Also, the teacher should set some regulations for students to follow in the classroom. I see myself as a teacher who is willing to help the students to be able to provide the students' needs and wants. I am open to learning from my students. I am capable of becoming a good teacher and to teach all levels of students. I have a strong English knowledge background. My beliefs come from my past experience as an ESL student and are based on what I think would be the best way of being an effective teacher. Also, my beliefs come from a couple of teachers I had back home." (notes, p. 2.13)

*Nadia.* Nadia is a 32-year-old woman, a bilingual teacher from Kuwait, where English is considered a foreign language. She began studying English at age 11, and after obtaining a degree in English language and literature she taught English in public K-12 levels in Jordan. Nadia considers her spoken English native-like and her written form at an advanced level. She had little contact with native speakers in her homeland, and she rarely used English outside of school. Most of the native speakers were expatriates who lived and worked in large cities. Nadia did not undergo teacher education because there was none. When she arrived in Canada she decided to take a master's degree, but she decided to take teacher education to prepare herself for graduate studies. Currently, she is in the TESL program, and her future career goal is to teach ESL to adult immigrant students.

I met Nadia in a parking lot about 2 years ago, when we were waiting for our rides. We started discussing the different programs we were in, when she revealed that she

taught English in her home country. About a year later I saw her in the TESL program, and after hearing about my study she came forward to volunteer. When I asked her what made her want to participate, she responded that one day she would like to do a study herself and that participating in one will help her understand the process. Eventually Nadia would like to teach adult ESL.

I asked Nadia if she experienced any benefits in being a NNEST in Canada. She stated, "Listening to native speakers' slang language, listening to native speakers' pronunciation, experiencing new culture, new points of view" (notes, p. 3.1). Nadia wrote some of the challenges she faced in Canada: "Maybe [I face challenges in] recognizing some vocabulary for food items, culture concepts" (notes, p. 3.1).

Nadia described how one becomes a teacher in her homeland: "In our country there is no teacher education program. Once you finish university, you are eligible to teach your subject matter, like English or mathematics" (notes, p. 3.4). She described the differences in education between her homeland and in Canada:

In my country there is a curriculum that each teacher has to follow. Listening and speaking skills are so weak. There are not enough teaching aids for the teacher in the classroom. The behaviour of students is different; their needs and the number of students in a class are also different.

Nadia commented on her satisfaction with the second-language teacher education: In Canada there is more focus on teaching; it is much better than the training in my country. In my country I got the experience of teaching big classes, different levels, but in Canada you feel more confident about what you are teaching" (notes, p. 3.4).

Nadia believes that she needs only more language training to enhance her self-image: "I need language training because this is the only area which I need to work on. I need more practice" (notes, p. 3.6). In an ideal situation, Nadia would prefer mainly NESTs as instructors and classmates in the TESL program. "I like the teachers and classmates to be mainly native speakers, to listen and learn from them." Nadia regards the average NNEST to be competent, and she herself is very confident of her English: "My language skills are good. I am a hard worker, organized, active, a good listener, and creative" (notes, p. 3.9). Nadia had the support of family and friends in her future plan to become an English teacher in Canada. Lastly, she mentioned writing as an area she would like to see as having more emphasis in teacher education program: "My writing is very good, but I feel like I need more practice" (notes, p. 3.9).

Drawing assignment: Nadia drew herself standing in front of the board. On the board is written "ESL Class in Winnipeg." Her classroom consists of three round tables. At each table there are five students. She says:

An effective teacher is a

Teacher who listens to his or her students,

Teacher who fulfils their needs,

Teacher who is demanding,

Teacher who is active and knows what she or he teaches,

Teacher who loves his or her career,

Teacher who is patient and cooperative, and a

teacher who has confidence in himself or herself and in the student's ability to learn.

I see myself as a teacher who loves her career, wants to teach adults, is cooperative, confident of her knowledge, [and] listens to her students.

It has always been my dream to be an excellent teacher, to have good knowledge, [be] active and loved and respected by [my] students. In my country people look up to teachers, especially if they are women. (notes, p. 3.13)

*Jane.* Jane is a 43-year-old woman, a bilingual teacher from Japan, where English is considered a foreign language. After obtaining a bachelor's degree in English, she taught high school for 18 years before coming to Canada. Jane considers her written proficiency in English at an advanced level but her spoken English at an intermediate level. Jane began learning English at age 13, in Grade 7. She rarely spoke English outside the language class. Jane's high-school English teachers were from America, England, and Canada. When not teaching students, Jane used her native language to communicate with NNESTs in the staff room. In Canada she first studied advanced English in the university's English Language Institute, but she found two courses in the CTESL program more effective. Currently she is pursuing graduate studies.

A mutual friend who knew Jane when she was a student in an advanced English language program recommended her to me. I met her in the university cafeteria. She asked me to fill out the questionnaire for her while she collected her thoughts; she felt that she could not write as quickly as she thought. Of all the participants, Jane possesses the most teaching experience in teaching public high school (18 years). I asked her what

made her participate in my study, and her response was that she met the criteria, and also she was curious about the study.

Jane felt that one of the main benefits of being a NNEST in Canada is that she used English as much as the native speakers. She observed that language and culture are intertwined in Canada and that she has gained a considerable amount of cultural information, which was not as evident in her use of English in her homeland. "In my country I did not have much opportunity to use my English. Here I use it every day to talk and to use the language fully" (notes, p. 4.1). Jane mentioned some challenges of being a NNEST in the areas of speaking and listening, especially in the media and in her conversation with native speakers:

Although I taught English in my country for many years, I still cannot catch everything when I watch TV or listen to the radio. I cannot catch everything in people's conversation. Also, the speed of reaction—or my feelings about something—is delayed. It is inferior to the speed of reaction of native speakers.  
(notes, p. 4.1)

Jane compared the education systems of the two countries and realized how much the language-teaching methods are lagging behind in her homeland; language methods that she believed are mired in a grammar translation method. Although her government had encouraged language teachers to use the communicative method, Jane feels that this is yet to be realized: "Our government encouraged us to use the communicative method, but it has not been successful because we don't have good-quality TESL programs. These programs are only available in special universities that liaise with Western universities."  
(notes, p. 4.1)

Another concern Jane expressed is that teachers in her homeland believe that they do not require TESL training to teach the English language; however, she believes that most English teachers are ill-equipped to teach their subject. "Most English teachers don't know how to teach English properly. They teach the way they are taught by their own teachers." Jane appreciates the long process that she underwent before she embarked on graduate studies. She made an important discovery about teaching early in the CTESL program:

In the university system in my country it is all lectures and passive reception of information. There are lots of exams to test how well you can memorize something. University entrance is tough, but once you are admitted, it is laid-back. Two CTESL courses taught me everything I needed to know about teaching. (notes, p. 4.3)

Jane would prefer that all of her teachers in the second-language teacher education programs be native speakers: "Native speakers are easier to listen to. If NNESTs have a strong accent, it is hard to understand them. Some of my friends had Indian instructors, and they complained to the administration about them" (notes, p. 4.4). Jane feels that the average NNEST is not very competent and sure about herself. She does not feel very confident about her proficiency in the English language:

I was confident of myself when I was in my country. I knew the weaknesses of my people, so I knew how to support them. Now I am not very confident of my teaching abilities in Canada, even though I have taught English for many years. (notes, p. 4.4)

Jane has the support of family and friends to be an effective teacher in Canada, but she cites three areas of greatest concern to her: pronunciation, her first-language background, and her accent. "I think that by studying further, my speaking and other

deficiencies will decrease. I have native [-] speaker friends, I have a conversation partner, I watch television, and I listen to the radio" (notes p. 4.10).

Drawing assignment: Jane has drawn a classroom in which she is giving a PowerPoint presentation at the far left corner of the room. She sketched 16 students: three groups of 4 students sitting at tables and facing each other, and 4 students standing at the board. In the corner to the right is Jane's desk. Along the wall near the teacher's desk is a series of maps and vocabulary posters. She says:

An effective teacher is able to motivate the students who have already given up studying English. Much depends on the teacher. Teachers can change the attitude of her students. I see myself as a teacher who teaches English as an international language. I want to encourage them to use English in class as much as possible. English is not only a written language, but also a useful language. I want to teach English enjoyably. My beliefs about teaching came from a teacher in junior high school. She was excellent. She put in me a love for learning. (notes, p. 4.13)

*Jack.* Jack is a 25-year-old man, a bilingual teacher from China, where English is considered a foreign language. Jack began learning English in high school. After receiving a bachelor's degree in the sciences, with a minor in English, and teaching English for 1 and half years in a private K-12 school in his home country, he decided to study English-language-teaching methodology courses in Canada. Although he rarely spoke English at home, he sometimes conversed in English in school or with people outside of the home or school environments. In his country, when he noticed the increase in the number of institutions offering English instruction, as well as a surge of English

language teachers coming from the West, he was encouraged in his desire to learn English.

In Canada, Jack is in the second course of the CTESL program. After this program he plans to study toward a master's degree in English. He believes that although a CTESL certificate program is sufficient for teachers planning to teach English as a foreign language, a NNEST should study a master's degree program to qualify to teach English in Canada.

Jack responded to my call for participants in the CTESL class. I asked him what made him respond to my study, and he replied jokingly, " Because I'm not a native speaker yet." Jack stated the main benefit of being a NNEST in Canada is its multicultural society:

In Canada it is multicultural, so I get to see new points of view. In my country it is one people, and everyone thinks the same. In Canada there are people to support you if you have problems. When I first came here, I met people who helped me to understand the city and find things. Some of these people were not even from my country. This is what I like about being in Canada. (notes, p. 5.1)

In regard to the challenges facing Jack, he expressed concern about the needs of advanced ESL students who may demand a native-speaker teacher:

The higher and more sophisticated the needs of the learner are, the more difficulty NNESTs will feel. I think that there are many people who think that the best way to learn English is from the native speaker. When I was learning English, I learned from both native speakers and from people from my own country. I have good

experience from both kinds of teachers in my country, but I am not sure about what my students will think of me in Canada. (notes, p. 5.1)

In comparing the differences of the teacher education programs in his homeland and in Canada, Jack noted the shortness of preservice training in his homeland. "We observe classes for one month in a middle or high school and teach for a few months. High-school and middle-school teachers evaluate us, and upon completion we are given a certificate" (notes, p. 5.4). Jack believes that it is necessary to learn teacher education methodology because of the experience he has had so far in the CTESL program:

In my opinion, the Canadian teaching system is better than my country's in terms of teaching. In fact, my major is in economics, which is not relevant to teaching English. I taught English for 1 and a half years, but without the kind of training that you get here. That's why I chose this program because I want good training to teach English. (notes, p. 5.5)

Jack prefers all native-speaker instructors in his teacher education program because he sees this factor in becoming a professional: "I want all native speakers because I want to assimilate into their group. It makes me feel more professional in teaching English" (notes, p. 5.8). Jack said that the average NNEST was competent, and he himself is confident of his English proficiency. "What affects my confidence level is that sometimes I feel shy to speak in front of native speakers. If not for my English, I think that I am as smart as any native speaker" (notes, p. 5.8). Although Jack is encouraged by family and friends to realize his career goals, he expressed concern about three areas of language proficiency: speaking, pronunciation, and accent. "Even though I cannot speak like a

native speaker, by exposing myself to native speakers in Canada I'll overcome my drawbacks in English" (notes, p. 5.10).

Drawing assignment: Jack drew himself teaching at the front of the classroom. His 12 students are sitting at tables in a U-shaped formation. Inside the U shape is a table with a television and video recording unit. He says:

An effective teacher is someone who acts like a friend. Often students have teachers who show authority, but this makes students intimidated. Even though they are teachers, in my opinion students should consider a teacher a friend.

I see myself as a teacher who is very kind. I am sure that I can be a good teacher.

The bottom line is that I will be very kind toward my students. My beliefs about teaching came from my teachers in high school and from my parents. (notes, p. 5.13)

*Sonya.* Thirty-one-year-old Sonya comes from Korea, where English is regarded as a foreign language. She began learning English in Grade 7 in her home country. Sonya believes both her written and spoken English are at an advanced level. She states that she rarely spoke English in her formative years, but decided to study English in university. She taught English to children for 2 years in a private school after taking a Bachelor of Arts degree. She sometimes had contact with native speakers at work, but had more frequent contacts with NNESTs; she added that one could meet a NEST simply by registering in a language institution. Her teaching specialty is English, and she chose this field because she believes in the importance of English.

When she first came to Canada, she had no intention of studying English right away; however, with two daughters in elementary school, her plans changed. Her career

aspirations include teaching English to Canadian immigrants. According to her academic planning, Sonya feels that after the CTESL program she would like to study more courses, attend seminars and workshops, and also take courses about the different cultures in Canada. She believes that by continuing to study these courses her English will improve, and she will be ready for a job. She is in her first course in CTESL.

Sonya responded to my call for participants in her CTESL class. She later stated that her reason for participating was that I might be able to direct her to finding suitable employment in the future. Sonya commented on how NNESTs could be of benefit to ESL students:

I think this will depend on the needs of the learner. If the learners want an ESL teacher who will be able to understand their cultural background and even their first language—in other words, in the point of affective needs—NNESTs will be of benefit to them. Their looks will also comfort the learners and help them to adapt themselves to the new environment and not to lose their identities. A NNEST's good understanding of the learners will help them to design lessons by using more appropriate and effective strategies. (notes, p. 6.1)

Sonya mentioned a number of challenges facing NNESTs, including their language proficiency levels and their employment:

The "unfluency" of my English (including accent, pronunciation, intonation, and the lack of rich knowledge about the Canadian culture [is a challenge for me]). NNESTs will not be of benefit to students who want to learn more accurate English and about the various and specific cultural backgrounds of Canada. The higher and more

sophisticated the needs are of the learner, the more difficulty the NNESTs will feel.

Also there may be learners who believe that the best way of learning English is from the NEST. Because of this, NNESTs may lose their opportunities to get jobs. (notes, p. 6.5)

Sonya did not undergo formal teacher education. She explained that the differences in education and teacher education between the two countries are noteworthy. She perceives that Canadian programs focus on the practical ways to get information across to the students:

In my country the education and the training program provide the students with a large amount of information and knowledge. Therefore they know lots of things in various areas. However, for the way of managing classrooms, Canada uses more practical ways. Practising lots of activities, free discussions, [and] involving in lots of projects or real tasks are examples, are important features of Canadian training. (notes, p. 6.5)

She believes that with more knowledge and education from teachers in Canada she will become a better teacher: "Trying to know, and studying, is an endless task in my life. I'd like to learn any information and knowledge, as much as I can, in order to be a good teacher" (notes, p. 6.6). Sonya believes that ideally her instructors in the CTESL program should be mainly native speakers:

I think that it would be an ideal situation if 30% of the teachers are non-native speakers. For me, interacting with native speakers is helpful because I want to get the model first language and the natural way of speaking. Otherwise I would not have too much contact with native speakers. (notes, p. 6.8)

Although Sonya feels that the average NNEST is competent, she does not feel very confident about her own English proficiency:

Teaching English and acquiring English are different. The students who are in Canada already have an optimal surrounding where they can acquire the language, as they live in Canada every day. Teaching and learning English is a very technical and psychological cognitive process occurring between the teacher and student. I have confidence at this point. The fact that I still cannot speak fluently makes me feel a little bit intimidated. (notes, p. 6.9)

Although her family and friends support her in her future goals, Sonya still feels that she is deficient in speaking, cultural knowledge, and vocabulary: "I still have some areas that need attention; I realize this from this teacher-training program. Sometimes I feel they are still obstacles for me, but I feel that if I continue to study, I will improve on my weaknesses" (notes, p. 6.10).

Sonya had some advice on how preservice teacher programs could foster better self-image for NNESTs: "CTESL courses are very helpful and should be necessary for the probationary [period] for ESL teachers. In my opinion, studying the various cultures will also be helpful for them" (notes, p. 6.10).

Drawing assignment: Sonya has drawn a figure of herself standing in front of the classroom and holding a goblet. She has a smile on her face. Behind her is the blackboard, with "Breakfast" neatly written on it. On one side of Sonya there is a table with two goblets and some cutlery; she has labelled these objects as "real objects." On the other side of her is a rectangular table with a laptop and an overhead projector on top; she

has labelled both these items. Lastly, Sonya has drawn three oval-shaped tables with four students sitting at each table. She says:

An effective teacher is a person who prepares and practises it before the class.

Without preparation and a good plan, it will be hard to be an effective teacher. Also, he or she should have the students understand the new items and knowledge, using a bunch of ways for comprehensible input. Then he or she has to help the students to associate (adapt) the knowledge to their lives.

I see myself as a teacher who sets the appropriate goals of the lesson, prepares all the stuffs [materials] for the lesson, is able to perceive the underlying philosophy, and manages the students effectively. My beliefs come from my experiences and the wisdom and philosophy that I have gained throughout my life, also from observing my children ... and by associating my experiences or case studies with the theories that are provided by textbooks and instructors. (notes, p. 6.13)

*Denise.* Denise is a 47-year-old woman, a bilingual teacher from the Ukraine. She first began learning English during 1 year in Grade 10, although the curriculum has changed much since she left her country, to the point where English instruction is now offered in primary school. After Grade 10 she continued to study English in university.

During a brief visit to Canada she decided that she would like to move there permanently. After graduation she taught English and Ukrainian for 2 years in a private school. She chose to learn and teach English because she wanted to prepare herself linguistically to emigrate to the West. Although Denise taught for a couple of years in her home country, in Canada she did not see herself as an English teacher right away. After

working in the health sector and helping in her children's school, she believed that she had the qualifications to teach English. Now that she is halfway through the TESL program, she has plans to study toward a master's degree before she embarks on a career to teach adult ESL.

Denise considers herself close to having a native-like command of English. She came forward to participate in the study after I explained the study to her TESL class. When I later asked her what made her come forward, her reply was that her English proficiency is advanced, but some employers have asked her about her first-language background. Although she is not bothered by this curiosity, she has often thought about what makes an ideal teacher. Eventually Denise would like to teach English to ESL students bound for university.

When I asked Denise what benefits she experienced being a NNEST, she reflected on the NNEST's ability to address the affective needs of her students: "I think I would be able to understand the students better on [an] emotional level—their difficulties with the language, as well as their feelings when they come up against negative reaction to their inability to communicate effectively" (notes, p. 7.1). When I asked her what challenges she faced as a NNEST, her response was directed to job-finding issues: "I think one of the disadvantages a NNEST faces is in searching for a job. If one potential employer denies them a job, it might create negative feelings for any future job prospects" (notes, p. 7.1).

Denise taught for a couple of years in her home country because her English was good. She believes that good teachers are those who want their students to succeed:

I think what I learned from other teachers back home is not too different from what I see here in Canada. Good teachers are dedicated to their students. They want to provide any kind of learning assistance they can, wherever they are in the world.  
(notes, p. 7.4)

She had this to say about the teacher education program differences between her home country and Canada:

I really like the Canadian teaching philosophy. I am learning a lot in these courses that I did not really think about in detail before. Some things are stressed, such as having a good lesson plan with lots of activities. (notes, p. 7.4)

In order to enhance her professional image, Denise believes she needs more volunteer teaching opportunities and more attention given to future job prospects. Her justification for the two areas is that she can prove her capabilities as a teacher to others: "I think voluntary teaching would give me credibility. If I am good at it, it can prove that I am [credible]" (notes, p. 7.6).

Denise would prefer an even number of NESTs and NNESTs as instructors in her TESL program: "My preference would depend on the ability of the teacher, not whether he or she was a native speaker or not. So it would depend on the individual and not on the fact if he or she was native or not" (notes, p. 7.8). Denise believes that the average NNEST is competent with English, and she stated that she is very confident in her English proficiency: "I think what affects my confidence level is the fact that I chose teaching English as a career. And I chose to enrol in this training program to learn how to be an effective teacher in Canada" (notes, p. 7.9).

Drawing assignment: Denise drew herself standing at the front of the board facing her class. Her students were sitting at tables in a U-shaped formation. Each figure was represented in stick figures. She said:

An effective teacher is someone who is able to convey to the students the content of the course being taught. He or she is a person who is able to give information to people in a precise and constructive way, so that the student uses what he or she was taught. A good teacher uses different techniques to teach and makes certain that all students in his or her class are learning, uses all tools that are available to him or her as a teacher. I see myself as a teacher who works with adults who are at an advanced level of English. I think that I am a good language teacher because I have learned English as a second language. I am empathetic toward the students' needs, and I understand at least some of their difficulties of learning another language. My beliefs come from experiences. I have been teaching my first language to English-speaking individuals for a couple of years. All the same techniques apply in teaching English. I was brought up in a home where learning was the norm. I learned to read before I went to school. My parents taught me as much [as] or more than any teacher has. (notes, p. 7.13)

*Reema.* Reema is a 36-year-old woman, a bilingual teacher from Cyprus. After receiving an undergraduate degree in English literature, she taught EFL (English as a foreign language, in countries where English is not recognized as an official language) in the English Language department of her university for 12 years. Reema considers herself native-like in both spoken and written communication. She had the rare contact with

native-speaker tourists, but daily contact with NNESTs at work. Reema took a number of certificate programs in teaching ESL: COTE (Certificate of Overseas Teachers of English), TELT (Certificate of Training in English Language Teaching), and CCEL (Certificate of Cambridge in English for Language Teachers). Like the other participants, she was unaware of the provincial teaching certificate for teaching K-12 until she arrived in Canada, though she preferred to teach adults. Upon arriving to Canada, she enrolled in a master's degree program to further study language-teaching methods. Since her graduation she has not been able to secure a job in her area of specialization.

I first met Reema in a graduate class in 2000, when I was not sure about my thesis topic. Later, Reema saw the "call for participants" notice on a university bulletin board and contacted me to ask about participating. When I asked her what made her participate, her response was that she invested time, energy, and money in retraining, but has yet to reap some benefit for her efforts. She wanted to participate with the study because she wanted to know how others were faring in second-language teacher education.

Reema would like to teach in a university or college, but at the time of this study, she was not able to secure a job. She would also consider working with immigrant women because she believes this group needs motivation to adapt to Canadian society. I asked Reema if she experienced any benefits of being a NNEST. She said:

I feel that the English that I learned in my country is very good. I was able to come to Canada and do a master's degree. Travelling is good for a NNEST because it gives them an opportunity to feel proud of learning a different language, one that is not common in their country. (notes, p. 8.1)

Reema mentioned some challenges of finding a suitable job, not only for herself, but also for her NNEST classmates:

I think there is a problem with offering so many programs for people to become certified to teach English in this city, but then there are no jobs for these teachers when they graduate. I don't know if any of the NNESTs in my classes will get a teaching job. Maybe they will get a job in another field and improve their English, but I doubt there will be jobs for them to actually teach English. (notes, p. 8.1)

In describing the differences between the ways NESTS and NNESTs teach, Reema believed that because many of the textbooks and teacher guides she used were from the West, she did not feel there were any sizeable differences:

I was teaching English in a European country, where most of my students were from the Middle East. Some of these students complained about the content and pictures of these textbooks, but we did not have any alternatives at the time. (notes, p. 8.3)

Reema expressed dismay about the differences between the education and training she received at home and the additional training in Canada:

I enrolled in the master's program as soon as I came to Canada, so I really don't know about the teacher education programs. What I do know is that in the master's program I took many courses that have no relevance to teaching. We just talk about many issues, but not how to become a better teacher in the classroom. (notes, p. 8.5)

She had this to say about the lack of emphasis in preparing teachers for the job market once they complete certification:

It is nice to see so many programs available for teachers who are educated and trained in different countries to learn Canadian teaching techniques and strategies.

The only problem I have is that the teacher may have a false sense of hope about getting a good job after the training. (notes, p. 8.6)

In order to establish herself professionally in Canada, Reema believes she needs more opportunities to practise teaching in a variety of language institutions with the purpose of getting hired. Reema believes that NNESTs should be treated like any other student in teacher education programs. She also believes that the instructors in teaching certification programs should be an even number of NESTs and NNESTs: "I prefer both groups of teachers because in the real world you are exposed to different speakers of English. Native speakers are not always the best examples of teachers" (notes, p. 8.8). Reema believes that the average NNEST is competent, and she describes herself as very confident of her English proficiency:

My English and teaching abilities are very good. When I apply for a job and go to interviews and then later find out that they hired somebody else, this affects my confidence level. But this is a temporary feeling. In spite of them not hiring me, I still feel confident of my abilities. (notes, p. 8.9)

Reema has the support of family and friends, but she believes that she is treated as a foreigner. This treatment, she believes, is mainly due to her non-Western accent:

I am treated like a foreigner because of my accent. I am a Canadian citizen now, but because of my accent I am still regarded as though I should not be teaching English here. I still prefer to work in Canada though because I really like the Canadian philosophy of teaching and learning. (notes, p. 8.10)

Drawing assignment: Reema drew a classroom with desks in a U-shaped configuration. There were 18 students sitting, and these she drew as stick figures. Reema

was standing at the blackboard facing students. On the board was the date and agenda for "today's lesson." On one side of Reema were her desk and, on top of it, reference books. On the other side were a table and a cassette player. On the walls were charts about grammar points and posters of cultures and peoples around the world. There was a map of the world on a side wall. She said:

An effective teacher is someone who is professionally prepared to teach. They have some knowledge of psychology, linguistics, and training from experienced teachers. They also like working with students. I see myself as a teacher who is professionally prepared to teach. I did many courses and programs that were designed specifically for teaching English. I like working with people from different countries. I was raised in a family where everyone had to choose a career. I look up to my brother who is a medical doctor in Europe. He worked very hard to achieve his goals. I am also motivated by my former students, who have shown me what more I need to do to be a better teacher. (notes, p. 8.13)

*Charles.* Charles is a 26-year-old man, a bilingual student from Taiwan, where English is considered a foreign language. He was formally schooled in English from age 12. Although he spoke English at school, he used every opportunity to use the new language outside the home or school environment. He considers both his written and spoken proficiency to be at an advanced level. Charles studied math and English at university. Upon graduation, he taught English at a private school for 1 year before coming to Canada. Charles was taught English by an impressive NEST from Australia all through secondary school, but the rest of his English language teachers were NNESTs

from his country. In the private school where he later worked, there was a high number of NESTs.

Charles came to Canada initially to join relatives. When he saw the number of education programs offered at the university, he chose to stay and enroll in the TESL program because he already had a bachelor's degree and some English-teaching experience. Currently he is in middle of the TESL certificate program.

He responded to my call for participants in the TESL class. When asked what made him participate in the study, he responded that he is not a native speaker of English, and he would like to know about some of their issues. I asked Charles what benefits he is experiencing as a NNEST, and he stated, "I think, for me, I see Canada as a multicultural country. And people are coming to Canada all the time. So maybe there will be lots of work for people like me to teach English to the immigrants" (notes, p. 9.1). Charles listed a number of obstacles in being a NNEST:

I think it's a difficult thing to be a NNEST in Canada. There is so much competition. There are not too many jobs, and I think the first choice for employer is the native speaker. My friends say that I am a good teacher, but friends cannot give me a job. (notes, p. 9.1)

Charles did not believe there were noteworthy differences between the way NESTs and NNESTs teach English in Canada:

If NNESTs are also trained in Canada, they have more information and knowledge about teaching than NESTs. NNESTs may have some advantage because they have learned a second language, and they want to teach it. It is not easy for them to teach something that did not come to them naturally. (notes, p. 9.3)

Charles did not know about the differences in teacher education programs until he enrolled in the TESL program:

I do not see too many problems with the teacher education in my country, but what I am learning in the TESL program is another way of teaching. I learned a lot of things about teachers and students. I prefer the program here. (notes, p. 9.4)

He expressed satisfaction in enrolling in a teacher education program, and he cited the following justification:

In general, the education in Canada focuses on encouraging the students to produce and demonstrate their understanding of new knowledge. Therefore the students will improve their speaking and writing skills and the ability to apply their knowledge to the real world. Canada has a much more useful and practical approach to teaching. (notes, p. 9.5)

Charles had this comment on the reasons he needs professional development with native speakers: "I think that NNESTs have to improve on their language skills. The best way is to work with native speakers" (notes, p. 9.6). In an ideal situation, Charles would prefer an even number of NESTs and NNESTs as instructors in the TESL program: "I think that NESTs can help NNESTs be good teachers" (notes, p. 9.8).

Although he regards the average NNEST as competent, Charles himself is not very confident as a non-native speaker of English: "When I am around NESTs in my TESL class, I feel less confident. That's why I like to sit next to native speakers" (notes, p. 9.9). Charles has the support of family and friends in his future plan to become an English teacher. He is concerned about his speaking skills, especially pronunciation and accent. He is not too worried at the moment because he wants to study more to gain more

confidence: "I think I will overcome this over time. It is inside me that I have to overcome" (notes, p. 9.10).

Drawing assignment: Charles has drawn a U-shaped seating arrangement with 14 students. A circle marks the teacher, with a "T" written inside the circle. The teacher is standing in front of the board facing the class. At the top right-hand corner are a TV and projector. Charles has labelled the whiteboard. He says:

An effective teacher understands the emotions of the students. He should be knowledgeable and use humour in the class. I see myself as a teacher who is emotional and likes to communicate with students. I think my beliefs come from a very nice teacher who taught me in high school. Also these beliefs come from my imagination. (notes, p. 9.13)

*Farrah.* Farrah is a 40-year-old woman, a bilingual teacher from the Fiji Islands, where English is one of the official languages. Learning English from Grade 8, she earned a bachelor's degree and then taught elementary school for 10 years. Farrah considers both her speaking and written English to be of a native-like command, but because of her overseas experience, she considers herself to be advanced when comparing herself to the native English-speaking teacher in Canada. In her homeland she attended workshops about effective teaching practices that were organized by both NEST and NNEST consultants. Since her family immigrated to Canada, she has volunteered in her son's school to gain more information about the Canadian education system. Currently unemployed, she would like to complete the TESL program because it will teach skills to work in the Canadian context and with adults.

A mutual friend of ours put Farrah in touch with me. She is in the TESL program in a western province. Farrah completed the questionnaire and returned it to me by fax. When I asked her what made her participate in my study, she stated that her English was "just fine," but that she was curious about the study. I asked Farrah what benefits she receives from being a NNEST. "I think that having learned English from a young age was very helpful because everyone understands me. No one really suspects that I came here just a few years ago" (notes, p. 10.1). She had one main obstacle that was about being a NNEST:

I don't think that it's easy for people who are educated in another part of the world to immediately get jobs in Canada. I was told that in order to teach in the public schools I have to study more at the university. So I decided to volunteer at my son's school to see if I really wanted to teach. Now I don't want to work in the public school. I prefer to teach English to adults. So maybe it's not too bad. (notes, p. 10.1)

On teacher education, she felt satisfied with the program because she felt that the information came from research-driven countries:

I believe my teacher education was pretty good back home. We always had opportunities to attend professional development courses, although they were expensive. These were taught by people from Britain, Europe, and America as well as non-native speakers. They would give us the latest information about teaching English to elementary-level students. (notes, p. 10.4)

Farrah believes that it was a good choice to enrol in the TESL program before applying for a job in Canada: "Although my teacher education was pretty good, we can

always improve our knowledge. I learned a lot from this TESL program so far" (notes, p. 10.5). Farrah commented on future employment factors after completing teacher training:

I think we need a lot of help in making the transition from this program to finding a suitable job. I am still not sure about what to do after this program. I used to teach a proper curriculum for kids that was developed by the education department. (notes, p. 10.5)

She would prefer all her instructors to be native speakers because she believes they are the ones who know all aspects of the English language: "I prefer all native speakers because I want to be trained by teachers who can speak English expressions with all the idioms and expressions that they know naturally" (notes, p. 10.8). Farrah believes that the average NNEST is competent, and she is very confident of her English proficiency: "I don't think there should be any extra attention given to NNESTs because they are taking this course with the intention of teaching English in the future" (notes, p. 10.8). Although her family is supportive of her career choices in Canada, they prefer that she do graduate studies before looking for work:

I have not faced any discrimination so far, but in the TESL classes one can feel that there are differences between native and non-native-speaking students. Some students are more outspoken. As students we are the same, but I don't think we will be treated the same way by employers. It's just a guess. (notes, p. 10.10)

Drawing assignment: Farrah has drawn a class of 16 students divided into four groups. She is standing at the empty blackboard. The students are sitting at circle-shaped tables. Farrah's desk is near the top left-hand corner. The classroom has charts, posters, and maps mounted on opposite walls. There is a bulletin board with student work

displayed. Beside the bulletin board is a "Question of the day" written on chart paper. At the back of the classroom there are three rectangular tables with a TV monitor, a videocassette player, an audiocassette player, and reference books. On the third table is a box marked "materials for teaching." She says:

An effective teacher is someone who is able to make people comfortable to learn.

She also thinks about how to motivate her students. Her lessons are interesting, and she plans lots of activities. I see myself as a teacher who is devoted to teaching. My beliefs come from my parents. I was raised by parents who did not go to school, but they encouraged me and my sisters to make our dreams come true. (notes, p. 10.13)

*Lisa.* Lisa is a 30-year-old woman, a bilingual teacher from Singapore, where English is taught as a foreign language. She started learning English from NNESTs at age 10. After obtaining a bachelor's degree in English, she taught for a year before immigrating to Canada. Lisa considers both her written and spoken English at an advanced level. In Canada, she decided to study the TESL diploma program to increase her level of English, but she will eventually enter a master's program to major in English. Currently she is in the first course of the TESL program.

Lisa responded to a call for participants when I entered her TESL class and asked students whether anyone would like to participate in my study. I later asked Lisa what made her participate in this study. She responded, " Because I am not a native speaker of English." I asked Lisa if she was experiencing any benefits of being a NNEST. "Being a NNEST in Canada is not too difficult because Canada is a multicultural country" (notes, p. 11.1). On obstacles or challenges of being a NNEST, she said, "There are many

challenges. You cannot find a job easily because your English is a little different from the Canadian English. It will take a lot of time to adjust" (notes, p. 11.1). Lisa wrote the following about her teacher education:

In Korea, I learned to teach once I got a job. It is not very hard if you have an education in that special area. The main problem is that back home we teach mainly grammar and reading, not speaking and listening. (notes, p. 11.4)

Lisa believes that it was a positive step toward her career that she continued her education in Canada, particularly in enrolling in the TESL program:

I really like the TESL program. It teaches things about teaching that are new to me. We also do many activities, and this makes learning enjoyable for the teacher and for the students. I also like learning from the more experienced teachers in my class. (notes, p. 11.5)

Lisa believes that more attention should be given to NNESTs in course design. She prefers that all of her instructors be NESTs so that she can make maximum progress in her language skills: "By having all native speakers, I can improve my English more quickly. Moreover, it makes me be able to regard myself as a native speaker" (notes, p. 11.8). Although Lisa believes that the average NNEST is competent, she is not very confident of her English proficiency:

When I first came to Canada, I was very intimidated. But when the time went by, I felt more comfortable. To live a long time in Canada makes me feel more confident in English and comfortable when I do conversation with Canadian people. (notes, p. 11.10)

Lisa's friends and family members are supportive with her career goal of teaching ESL, but Lisa is concerned about three areas of her language proficiency: speaking, accent, and pronunciation. She does have a plan, however, to overcome these areas of self-declared deficiencies: "I'll overcome my weaknesses of English by studying very hard" (notes, p. 11.10).

Drawing assignment: Lisa has drawn herself standing in front of the classroom. The student's desks are in a U-shape formation. Lisa has written the date on the blackboard. On a rectangular table at the back of the room are resource books and videotapes. On the walls are posters of different cultures. She says:

In terms of teaching English, teachers should be very patient, especially when teaching beginners. Some students need more time to understand and to say something. Teachers have to encourage students to keep speaking without any hurry. I see myself as a teacher who will not always focus on grammar and reading because this is what I used to do in Korea. The education system in Korea is very different from other countries. Learning English is a way to get a job, not for communication with other people. I want to teach all aspects of English. (notes, p. 11.13)

*Min.* Min is a 55-year-old woman, a bilingual teacher from Vietnam, where English is taught as a foreign language. She began to learn English in Grade 7. Currently working as a teaching assistant in a large school district in a major city in Canada, she recalled the conditions that led her and a younger sibling to escape her war-ravaged homeland. After completing a 4-year bachelor's degree at age 24 in her homeland, she was employed by

the army to teach elementary school children her first language and English, alongside American native-English-speaking teachers.

As soon as the Communists took over her country, she and her younger brother arrived in Canada as refugees in 1980, while many who were not so lucky were stripped of their jobs, homes, and livelihoods; some were even banished to eke out a living in the jungles. Min considered herself one of the lucky ones until she arrived in Canada, where she found herself struggling to adjust to a fast-paced lifestyle. Settling in central Canada, she gradually mustered strength to reach out and be helped by her country folk who were more established.

Min considers her spoken and written English proficiency to be at an advanced level. She has lived in Canada for 24 years and worked for the school division most of these years, and she often thought about studying for a Canadian teaching degree. Helping to support her younger brother; however, became her first priority, so she worked at odd jobs until she found a teaching assistant job in the city's largest school division.

A native speaker of English in the TESL program referred Min to me. They both worked in the same school division. Min did not want to come to a meeting because she was babysitting her brother's children over the summer holidays. However, she agreed to be interviewed by phone. Her reason for participating was that she wanted to help me with my study after her friend told her about the study.

I asked Min about the challenges she faced in trying to establish herself as a teacher in Canada. She said:

We moved to [a Canadian city], and I first worked in a factory for 8 months. No one was helping us. I was not thinking about teaching. There were special weekend

programs offered by the [city's] school division. I could do the program over four full summers. My friends told me about these programs. But I had to support my brother because he was younger. I had to look for other jobs.

Then one of my friends told me about the TA [teaching assistant] positions at the school division. I applied there and got the job. I thought about returning to school to become a teacher many times, but I was the only one here to look after my brother. (notes, p. 12.1)

I asked Min, if she could go back in time, what actions would have helped her to engage in teacher education so that she could teach in Canada. She said:

When I came here, it was very hard to survive. It is hard to change the past. Who [would] feed us? I don't know. Maybe if the government supports me and my brother—pays the rent and food, like that—maybe I could return to university and study. I don't know. (notes, p. 12.1)

I asked Min what teacher qualities she possessed. "If I went to university and became qualified when I came to Canada ... then maybe I could be a good teacher. Now I am ready to retire soon." (notes, p. 12.2)

Drawing assignment: Min did not participate in the drawing assignment.

*Focus Group.* From the focus group and the questionnaire, participants generated a list of supports. Participants were not in agreement on the order of importance or ranking of the list. As a group, they were asked questions about teacher education (see Appendix F for more details). The discussion generated a variety of concerns and suggestions for helping preservice English-as-second-language teachers.

Participants stated that if there were a systematic way to teach English, they would like to learn methodologies to teach English properly. They believed that as they learn more about teaching methodologies, they would also learn a proper format to teach English. They were confident about their knowledge of grammar structures, for example, but they would like to learn how to teach grammar communicatively so that it is an enjoyable learning and teaching experience for both learners and instructors.

Participants were aware of the stylistic differences in English that they learned at home compared to that taught and spoken in Canada. They would like to expand their vocabulary so that they can increase their repertoire to reflect the growth of English as an international language. Some of the participants would like to learn more about different cultures and cultural issues in learning and teaching language. Although they feel that they will learn Canadian cultural information over time, they feel that there are many peoples in Canada; the participants would also like to learn more about other cultures.

Some of the participants noted that they knew at least two languages and that a number of native-speakers in their classes were monolingual. They believed that monolingual speakers should strive to learn an additional language to be able to identify with the struggle of learning another language. In addition, the participants were proud of the fact that they learned English well enough in their homelands to pursue studies in the West and to be accepted in teacher education programs.

Participants wanted to have the benefit of observing and working with more experienced teachers so that the former can get a sense of how teachers actually teach in the classroom. Some participants would like to continue their professional development so that they can keep abreast of new research, new techniques and new strategies to teach

ESL. They expressed that apart from university classrooms, they did not have a clear picture of how teachers in Canada really teach.

Participants would like to observe NEST practitioners so that the former they can feel that they can be just as effective instructors; they would like to volunteer in ESL classes where the teacher is a native-speaker.

One participant stated that she would like a long practicum, which would help her understand how the education system works in Canada. Participants also stated that finding a job after graduating in their homelands was not a difficult thing, but in Canada they felt that TESL/CTESL programs should add interview skills and job preparation as part of their programs.

Finally, NNESTs would like teacher education instructors to do some special activities to appreciate NNESTs in the classroom. One activity suggested by NNESTs was to promote mixed groupings of native and non-native speakers so that shy NNESTs could practise their speaking skills in a small group and because NNESTs of the same language background would be discouraged from using their native language in class.

### *Conclusion*

In this section, the data describing participants' responses to the questionnaire, short interview, drawing assignment, and focus group are transcribed. The three tables illustrate that the participants represent ten countries that recognize English as either an official language or foreign language. The reader has a clearer picture of the participants' educational and professional backgrounds, their motivation for enrolling in second language teacher education, and their future professional goals. The majority of the

participants have a degree in English, as well as some informal or formal teaching experience. This section ended with participants' suggestions for improving services in second language teacher education programs for the benefit of all teachers. In the next chapter, I will analyze the data and present my interpretation of the findings.

## Chapter Five: Discussion

In this section, I will analyze the data and present my interpretation. The findings of the study are generally reflective of the literature and previous studies about NNESTs. The themes that emerged from the data are discussed under three topics: a) Who are NNESTs? There is a variety of NNESTs in teacher education programs: NNESTs include international students, landed immigrants, and Canadian citizens and the differentials in their personal language learning experiences and teacher training in their homelands; their length of stay in Canada; and their understanding of Canadian culture in general and language teaching pedagogy affect NNESTs in different ways; b) Linguistic issues: NNESTs' have issues with their linguistic performance. Their concerns about their lack of fluency and having a good knowledge of Canadian vocabulary affect their confidence, which fluctuated from not confident to very confident; and c) Professional issues: In turn, linguistic issues and the vocabulary of NNESTs affect their professional goals and self-images as future teachers. NNESTs are concerned about the recognition of their credentials; getting good jobs; and having Canadian experience to prove they are effective language teachers.

### *Variety of NNESTs*

Though no two NNESTs are alike, there is some overlap in the majority of those who participated in this study. NNESTs represent a variety of backgrounds (Table 1&2): countries of origin; status of English in their homelands and their access to English; differentials of when they were first introduced to English; how often they use English; their contact with native and non-native speakers; their prior experience of using English

in the workplace; their motivations for studying in adult teacher education programs; and their future career and educational goals. A number of issues have surfaced in the discussion that affects NNESTs as individuals and as a group. These issues differ according to the personal and professional goals of each NNEST.

Farrah (Fiji Islands), Jennifer and Lisa (Singapore) represent participants from countries where English is an official language. The rest of the participants came from countries where English is regarded as a foreign language. The implication of the variety in NNESTs is that they are not one homogenous group, but individuals who have different personal and professional goals.

International students represent an important group for consideration in second-language teacher education programs. Seven of the 12 participants who volunteered in this study were international students, and most of them wanted to improve their language skills. Jennifer, John, Jane, Jack, Sonya, Charles, and Lisa were international students who stated that they would like to teach English in the future, but that they needed more language training before they seek employment.

In Table 4 the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) were more of a concern to this group of teacher trainees than other aspects of professional preparation. The international students interpreted "recredentialing" to mean that they were strengthening their credentials by adopting Western-style pedagogy and approaches to language teaching, which is further supported by their drawings of Western-style communicative classrooms.

Virtually every participant in Table 4 wanted professional preparation in terms of language development, but few wanted to learn about writing effective lesson plans, how

to teach grammar or know about culture. Further, Jack, Jane, and Lisa may work toward a graduate degree because they believe that their language skills and their chances of finding employment will both improve.

Immigrant and Canadian NNESTs accounted for the remainder of the participants. Denise and Min have resided in Canada the longest, 10 and 24 years respectively. Denise found employment in the healthcare field soon after coming to Canada. It was through her work at a hospital that she continued to improve her linguistic skills. Min struggled with menial jobs until an opportunity to work in the school district allowed her to return to a school environment, which she was once familiar with in Vietnam. Both participants were confident about their language skills, due to their living in the West for more than 10 years. This length of residence may be a stronger indicator of positive language skills (Kamhi-Stein et al., 2004) than having many years of teaching English, as in Jane's case.

Kamhi-Stein's (2000) study examining the self-perceptions of 32 NNESTs and 55 NESTs at the K-12 levels revealed that both groups of teachers had positive perceptions of their English language skills, owing to the fact that the NNESTs interviewed had lived in America for a minimum of 10 years. Among the group of participants in my study, Denise, Nadia, and Farrah have been in Canada the longest, and their level of confidence was higher overall.

Table 4: Aspects of professional preparation that NNESTs hope to improve

| Area of improvement                 | Number of participants<br>checked off this category |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Speaking improvement                | 9                                                   |
| Listening improvement               | 9                                                   |
| Job placement skills                | 9                                                   |
| Writing improvement                 | 8                                                   |
| Reading improvement                 | 8                                                   |
| Understanding of education system   | 7                                                   |
| Understanding of education policies | 7                                                   |
| Interview skills                    | 7                                                   |
| Knowledge of English culture        | 2                                                   |
| Teaching grammar rules              | 1                                                   |
| Preparing effective lesson plans    | 1                                                   |

Not securing an instructor position at a college, Reema has come to the realization that though her qualifications are of a high standard, there may not be enough jobs in the city for her to pursue. Looking to diversify her education and training, she has considered working with new immigrants in a different capacity:

It is nice to see so many programs available for teachers who are educated and trained in different countries to learn Canadian teaching techniques and strategies. The only problem I have is that the teacher may have a false sense of hope about getting a good job after the training. (Reema, this text p. 65)

An implication of the amount of contact with English in participants' early years may reveal information about how important their governments place on English language education. Seven of the participants began learning English in upper elementary grades; four learned English in high school; and one participant, John, started English lessons at age 18. Zhu (2002), a native of China, revealed that she was not happy with her earlier language learning experiences, which stressed repetition and direct translation methods of English to Chinese and vice-versa. She believed that English became popular in her country for two reasons: a) the university exam, once abolished by the Communist regime, was reinstated and English was one of the subjects tested; b) China needed business and trading partners and more contact with the outside world. Offering English to younger children in countries where English is regarded as a foreign language may translate to economic benefits, for such an enterprise seeks to have a common language with the rest of the world.

In the meanwhile, overseas private schools are providing language lessons to students for a fee while enabling NNESTs to gain some informal teaching experience. While most of the NNESTs did not have formal teacher education in their homelands and received their teaching experience in private schools, Jennifer appreciated the value of learning how to plan a lesson in her TESL program whereas John recalled his CTESL training program as promoting a missing element from his homeland experience: making learning fun for both the teacher and student.

### *Linguistic Issues*

Although NNESTs were not asked to rate which aspects of professional preparation they would like to improve on, more NNESTs indicated improvements in speaking, listening, and job placement skills than other areas (see Table 4 for complete list). NNESTs enrolled in adult second-language teacher education programs are concerned about how to make a smooth transition from student to teacher. To be accepted in teacher education, NNESTs must have a certain level of language proficiency, prerequisites for the program, and motivation to succeed. For NNESTs, it can be assumed that they have an investment or incentive for taking these courses. Ideally it would be worthwhile to work out how to bridge the gap between the needs of the NNEST and the pre-service teacher education programs.

One of the most important factors in hiring language teachers is their proficiency in the language. They must be good language models for their students. Yet one of the concerns raised by NNESTs in teacher education programs is this question: How much proficiency is good enough to make the teacher an effective language teacher? Can administrators address NNESTs' concerns about language preparation in teacher preparation programs that heavily focus on pedagogical issues without diluting the content and aim of the program? (Medgyes, 1994; Liu, 1999)

*Oral language proficiency.* Horowitz (1996) reported that many NNEST teachers in training, as well as NNEST professionals, felt some level of anxiety and stress over their language proficiency. Some of the participants in this study expressed concern that their speaking skills, namely their accent and pronunciation, might hamper their future efforts to be considered as English teachers in Canada.

Speaking skills cannot ordinarily be developed unless one has a speaking partner. Seven of the participants have lived in Canada for less than 3 years. Most of the participants had limited exposure to English outside the school environment in their homelands, and they are anxious about their elocutionary skills. Clear pronunciation and accuracy are mentioned by a number of participants as being the most important concern for NNESTs. Jennifer's awareness of her pronunciation stems from reading others' body language:

I feel a big difference in my accent and pronunciation. People do not understand me right away. I look at their faces, and I know that they don't understand me.

Sometimes I have to repeat what I say because of the looks on their faces. (Jennifer, this text p. 41)

Dealing with the problem differently, Sonya looks to working with low-level learners: "NNESTs will not be of benefit to students who want to learn more accurate English" (Sonya, this text, p. 56).

Speaking a second or foreign language well is a challenge, especially when it is expected that the NNEST will have excellent speaking skills. These two participants believe that they may be accurate in their speech, but that their interlocutors will ultimately decide through their gestures whether repetition or rephrasing is needed. Sonya alludes to working in the lower level classroom, where she would be able to control the complexities of the language through her lesson planning.

With regard to speaking and accent issues, courses in accent reduction or the like may prove to be disempowering to a NNEST, who may have the stigma of the accent which the ESL student is trying to get rid of (Amin, 2004). English, spread throughout

the globe, tolerates all accents, so emphasis on accents is not the issue. Clear pronunciation is noticed and understood by students. For example, I team-teach English with an instructor from India who does not pronounce the "v" sound; she enunciates 'verb' as 'werb'. My colleague teaches grammar, reading, and writing, while I teach listening and speaking. Our students often check word pronunciation with me, but they have not once challenged her abilities as a teacher. In fact, her students are entertained by her art of storytelling.

Although this example contradicts Lippi-Green's (1997) study on accent discrimination of instructors from non-Western countries, the students in my school actually preferred someone from a different language background to their own after it was discovered that the Arabic teacher was providing answers during exams as a way to boost her own language teaching performance among a variety of NNESTs. So in this case, students actually preferred to be taught by an instructor from a different language background because they identified the importance of personal traits of integrity and rapport with students as important requirements in teachers, which the teacher from the same language background did not have. This example demonstrates that more studies should be conducted to determine how professional gaps affect teachers of language. Mahboob (2004) concluded from his study of ESL students' perceptions of their teacher that NNESTs ranked higher in teaching literacy and grammar skills and that NESTs were preferred for teaching oral language skills. One can deduce from these studies that a collaborative team of having both kinds of speakers on staff may be beneficial to all students.

Some of the participants expressed the need to have native speakers in their teacher-training classes in order to have a model not only in the instructor, but also in classmates. Nadia said, "I like the teachers and classmates to be mainly native-speakers, to listen and learn from them" (Nadia, this text p. 48). Lisa agreed, "By having all native-speakers, I can improve my English more quickly. Moreover, it makes me regard myself as a native-speaker" (Lisa, this text p.73). Lippi-Green's study (1997) argues that adult second-language learners will face difficulties in trying to change their accent. Even if students could change their adult accents, they would still be confronting issues of discrimination: "Race, gender, class, and Third World status would be factors in their continuing disempowerment" (Amin, 2001).

Both Sonya and Jack believe that they are better suited for beginner or low-level learners. Like Sonya, Jack believes that NNESTs may be unsuitable for the advanced language learner: "The higher and more sophisticated the needs of the learners are, the more difficulty NNESTs will feel" (Jack, this text p. 53). Although Jack alludes to being more suitable to teaching beginner students, he recalled that one of the main benefits of being in Canada is its multicultural society:

In Canada it is multicultural, so I get to see new points of view. In my country it is one people, and everyone thinks the same. In Canada there are people to support you if you have problems. When I first came here, I met people who helped me to understand the city and find things. Some of these people were not even from my country. This is what I like about being in Canada. (Jack this text p. 53)

Medgyes (1994) believed that both NNESTs and their students would benefit if NNESTs could teach all levels of English. In reference to speaking skills, he imagines a

scenario in which the teacher has poor pronunciation and is working with beginners, who rely on the teacher fully as their role model to assist them with their emerging pronunciation needs. Also, teachers who want to teach only beginners may see their own language levels fossilize. A better plan would be to have teachers teach all levels—low to high—so that both teacher and student benefit in the long run (Medgyes, 1994).

It is interesting that Jane, a visible minority woman, makes the comment that another NNEST was unacceptable in her homeland because of his accent," Some of my friends had Indian instructors, and they complained to the administration about them" (Jane, this text p. 51). The fact is that there is not one, single, real version of English that will fit every geographical region of the world. We live and communicate in many real worlds or discourse communities, and each one has specific expectations regarding the type, form, and conventions of the language used within it, such as Nigerian English or Singaporean English.

*Vocabulary Development.* Vocabulary was another area of concern to NNESTs. Nadia expressed some concern about her language proficiency in regard to food items, "Maybe [I face challenges in] recognizing some vocabulary for food items..." (Nadia, this text p.47). Mastering the vocabulary of any language is a monumental task—even in one's native language. Even in our own language we may not know the names of common things in our surroundings. A male native-speaking teacher friend of mine was puzzled at the word "cutlery," before his wife explained to him that it was a word for spoons, knives, and forks.

Kamhi-Stein's study (2004) of K-12 NNESTs teacher practitioners identified communication skills and vocabulary (e.g., idiomatic speech) as areas of difficulty.

Vocabulary development continues to evolve due to the changes in our society. After having lived overseas for six months in an isolated Saharan city, I returned to Canada to find so many new terms in everyday use (e.g., thinking inside/outside the box, and Whatever!) Postcolonialism linguistic development is reflected in many areas: technology, literature, science and commerce. Not only do we see numerous regional and social varieties of English, but also these varieties continue to evolve within generations. The implications for NNESTs, who learned a particular variety in their homelands, would be to continue their vocabulary development in Canada so that they can improve their own language proficiency and facilitate their students' changing needs.

Participants' concerns over their perceived linguistic deficiencies gives support to the title of this thesis ("The unfluency of my language"), which is further supported by Fairclough's belief that people's self-identity are becoming increasingly shaped by the power structures that use language to transmit their ideologies of what is correct and acceptable. In regards to linguistics, he asserted in his theory of critical language awareness (CLA) that varieties of language differ according to purpose, situation, or *appropriateness*, and that "educational institutions are heavily involved in the general developments affecting language in relation to power" (p. 200). Language used in discourse is not neutral; it involves linguistic, cognitive, political, social and cultural processes. Because some of the participants have learned English in foreign contexts and had their teacher education conducted in the West, learners may want to pay attention to the social and political implications of language and to the ways in which their own language development progresses (i.e., their own language variety). Fairclough further added that learners should practise CLA so that they can be effective citizens in a

democratic world, where social problems could be addressed through language. It may be discomfoting to call attention to one's differences, but a growing body of literature on the triumphs and struggles of NNESTs may provide some role modeling and comfort for the teacher trainee.

Participants' self-concern about not knowing enough, and their focus on needing more language training in spite of having degrees in English (and in some cases, also having intensive language training in English), may indicate that they have internalized some of the biases of the field that have to date favoured native-speakers and Western (vs. peripheral) biases partial to English speaking countries. In the Canadian classroom, NNESTs may have encountered bias and/or inequalities and/or exclusion in classrooms within the CTESL or TESL programs that erode their linguistic confidence unjustifiably (C. Schmidt, personal communication, November 9, 2005). If this speculation is correct, it may be increasingly important for instructors to seek out ways of addressing exclusion in the classroom by addressing racism and incorporating confidence-building activities.

### *Professional issues*

As we examine in Table 5, participants listed more education about cultural issues, more volunteer training opportunities, and more language training as areas needed for professional growth. This table defines the different activities that affect the participants' self-images as ESL teachers. Professional issues that most concerned NNESTs were categorized into four areas: teacher education, confidence levels, cultural adaptation, and self-image as future teachers of ESL.

*Teacher education.* In Table 2 we can see that participants were generally in two categories: The experienced teachers wanted to show off their teaching skills as a way to get Canadians to recognize their teaching credentials; the others were lacking in teaching pedagogy and experience, but saw the potential to become teachers after enrolling in their programs. Jane has the most experience in teaching English, yet she is finding it difficult to understand speech in the media, though she herself has employed many strategies to communicate with English speakers. Jane said, "I think that, by studying further, my speaking and other deficiencies will decrease. I have native-speaker friends, I have a conversation partner, I watch television, and I listen to the radio" (Jane, this text p.52).

One of the concerns about making a transition from a student to a teacher is having relevant teaching experience, but where can a NNEST obtain teaching experience? Reema, Farrah and Denise were ready to shift their focus from their teacher education programs to securing jobs. Denise commented on how, if she were to get some volunteer teaching time, others would see her capabilities: "I think voluntary teaching would give me credibility. If I am good at it, it can prove that I am [credible]" (Denise, this text p.61).

Some teachers mentioned the usefulness of teacher education programs such as TESL and CTESL, and it is through these programs that they have made self-discoveries about the areas of professional preparation needing attention. Sonya said, "I still have some areas that need attention. I realize this from this teacher-training program. Sometimes I feel they are still obstacles for me, but I feel that if I continue to study, I will improve on my weaknesses" (Sonya, this text p.58)

Charles said:

If NNESTs are also trained in Canada, they have more information and knowledge about teaching than NESTs. NNESTs may have some advantage because they have learned a second language, and they want to teach it. It is not easy for them to teach something that did not come to them naturally. (Charles, this text p. 67)

Similarly, Jack appreciated the teacher education programs:

In my opinion, the Canadian teaching system is better than my country's in terms of teaching. In fact, my major is in economics, which is not relevant to teaching English. I taught English for 1 and a half years, but without the kind of training that you get here. That's why I chose this program because I want good training to teach English. (Jack, this text p.54)

It is noteworthy that these three teachers were taught to teach by teaching in their homeland. Jack commented on the training he received in his homeland as his being able to acquire teaching credentials after only a few months of practice teaching and being observed by experienced teachers, though his language-teaching credentials would not be sufficient for teaching in public schools. He attributes his positive attitude toward teaching English to having been exposed to both groups of teachers in his high school.

NNESTs did not express objections to enrolling in teacher education because they felt these programs enhanced the education and on-the-job training they received from their home countries. Some teachers are learning teaching methodologies and strategies for the first time, "Two CTESL courses taught me everything I needed to know about teaching" (Jane, notes p.51); "I really like the Canadian teaching philosophy. I am learning a lot in these courses that I did not really think about in detail before. Some things are stressed, such as having a good lesson plan with lots of activities." (Denise,

this text, p.61) “I don’t think that they really teach you to teach back home. All teaching strategies [I have] learned are from this CTESL course” (John, this text p.44). By taking TESL and CTESL programs, they have learned more about Canadian culture and English language usage (word choice and idioms). Other benefits include improvements in pronunciation, sitting in classes with both NESTs and NNESTs, and obtaining more information about the places in which they would like to work upon graduation.

Mentoring or collaboration has been recognized as a win-win situation for both NESTs and NNESTs because teachers are working together for a common goal, and more is learned than by working alone (de Oliveira & Richardson, 2004). Though teachers may have similarities in teaching approaches, their backgrounds, native languages, cognitive styles, education, training, and cultures allow teachers to value and celebrate differences without feeling that one is less competent (p. 297). Some of the benefits that Luciana, a Brazilian NNEST, experienced from collaborating with Sally, an American NEST, were in learning new idioms, vocabulary, and pronunciation. In pronunciation, Sally would let Luciana study the way her mouth, tongue, and teeth moved and how to break down the different syllables; Luciana later used this technique with her students.

Pronunciation and sociolinguistic competence are not the only benefits of collaboration, and it is not always the NNEST who benefits. NESTs have reported being better able to understand the learning process of ESL and EFL; in particular, they become aware of the complexities of teacher's language usage in the classroom, which may be beyond student comprehension.

*Confidence.* Participants' confidence fluctuated from low to high due to a variety of factors: lack of proper teaching credentials, language proficiency levels, perceived deficits in accent and pronunciation, and perceived lack of cultural knowledge. Sonya mentioned a number of challenges facing NNESTs, including their language proficiency levels and their employment. She summed up her challenges of being a NNEST in Canada as not being confidently fluent in English. She coined a new term, *unfluency*, to illustrate her point:

The 'unfluency' of my English (including accent, pronunciation, intonation, and the lack of rich knowledge about the Canadian culture [is a challenge for me]). NNESTs will not be of benefit to students who want to learn more accurate English and about the various and specific cultural background of Canada" (Sonya, this text p.56).

Many years of teaching English in their homeland did not necessarily make teachers more confident of their language proficiency, but this lack of confidence did not prevent them from entering teacher-training programs with NESTs. Lee and Lew's (2001) study examined the self-perceptions of non-native speakers in TESOL programs and concluded that above everything else, NNESTs felt that their most valuable asset was in the experience of learning English. The authors also noted that a number of TESOL programs are beginning to require applicants to have some experience in learning a second or foreign language.

Some NNESTs were either confident or very confident of their language proficiency. Farrah, Nadia, Denise, John, Jennifer, Jack, and Reema all stated that they were in fact confident or very confident. Learning English at an early age was the reason behind Farrah's confidence level: "I think that having learned English from a young age was very

helpful because everyone understands me. No one really suspects that I came here just a few years ago" (Farrah, this text p.70).

Incidentally, while these NNESTs were confident of their language proficiency, John, Farrah, and Jack preferred all native-speaking instructors in their teacher education programs. Farrah made reference to native speakers knowing the idioms and expressions naturally, whereas Jack wanted native-speaker models so that he could assimilate into the native-speaker population. John's concern was in having an ideal model: "I prefer all native speakers because only they can model the language in a natural way" (John, this text p.45). The problem with this attitude is that just as some NNESTs have this preference, so might ESL students in programs who pressure schools to hire NESTs. Some NNESTs regard the Canadian teacher education programs as the source of their confidence. Denise studied in various courses and programs before enrolling in the current teacher education program. John notes that what helps build his confidence is the positive interaction between the teachers and students in his CTESL program. Jennifer prides herself in identifying her teacher quality of being able to adapt to new situations as a confidence-boosting quality. Reema is an accomplished graduate of a master's program, but her confidence seems ultimately linked to her unemployment status:

When I apply for a job and go to interviews and then later find out that they hired somebody else, this affects my confidence level. But this is a temporary feeling. In spite of them not hiring me, I still feel confident of my abilities. (Reema, this text p.65)

Feelings of inadequacy may result from the deeply entrenched historical realities of colonialism. Pennycook (1998) believed that colonialism and its influence in the theory

and practice of English language training has made a lasting impression on the postcolonialism period. He and Kachru (1997) argued that Western colonial discourses are set up in the form of a Self (superior) and Other (inferior) construct that continues to affect English discourses. Widdowson (1994) discussed the power dynamics of native speakers and non-native speakers as "ownership" of the language issue. Said's (1979) work highlighted cultural imperialism, whereby the powerful Western (white) ideology constructed, controlled, and regarded the Other as inferior. Many years of political and linguistic hegemony of colonialists have left their mark on the way English is regarded when non-native speakers move from the Outer (expanding) to the Inner circle (Kachru, 1985).

For some NNESTs with experience and training at the highest level, discrimination is reflected in the political realities of the changing world. With a PhD and 13 years of teaching experience, some at the university level, Faiza Derbal's knowledge and teaching credentials were questioned because of her NNEST status and her being an Arab Muslim (Zacarian, 2005). Now that English is spreading to so many corners of the globe, how much will history and political understanding restrain non-native speakers' rights not only to learn English, but also to teach it in any part of the world?

Jack not only sees value in teacher education programs, but he suggests that NNESTs should complete studies at a master's level before teaching. This sentiment is general among NNESTs, who believe that hard work will make up for not being native speakers (Kamhi-Stein, 1999). By further pursuing their education, NNESTs would be in a better position to be employable in the future.

Jack expressed the idea that being surrounded by native speakers affected his confidence level: "What affects my confidence level is that sometimes I feel shy to speak in front of native speakers. If not for my English, I think that I am as smart as any native speaker" (Jack, this text p.54). Charles agreed: "When I am around NESTs in my TESL class, I feel less confident. That's why I like to sit next to native speakers" (Charles, this text p.68).

These two participants also believe that their pronunciation is perceived as less than standard, especially when compared to the native speaker. Charles is quite brave to sit next to native speakers, which, in his mind, is the source of his lack of confidence. This self-doubt coincides with Samimy and Brutt-Giffler's study (1999), which concluded that NNESTs may feel less disadvantaged if they are not working with native speakers. They want native speakers around, so that even if there is a feeling of competition, at least they can emulate the better developed teaching skills of that group.

Such accomplished NNESTs as Medgyes (1994) and Braine (1999) saw that it is not so much a linguistic issue as one regarding professional self-esteem. Also, Amin (another NNEST) questioned whether an "intrinsic connection between race and language ability" exists (p. 580), whereby English is a white language and can be taught only by a white teacher. Then how can NNESTs in teacher education programs openly challenge these prevalent assumptions? Whiteness in teacher education has been a concern to a number of researchers (Glazier, 2003; Clark & Medina, 2000; Sleeter, 2001; Britzman, 1986). Their research demonstrates that the average person going into teacher education is a middle-class, white, monolingual woman, even though classrooms are becoming more and more multicultural.

In a slightly different context, Beynon and Toohey's (1996) study revealed that university students of Punjabi Sikh and Chinese ancestry had a mixed response to a career in teaching, and they cited two factors for their hesitation to enter a teaching field: confidence in English language skills, and parental attitudes towards children choosing non-scientific or business careers. One of the students regarded teaching as requiring good oral communication skills, which they did not believe they had, even though they had lived in Canada for many years.

Although Beynon and Toohey's study focused on entry to B. Ed programs, it is noteworthy that some of the participants immigrated to Canada as teenagers, but a number of participants who did not wish to be teachers were born in Canada. Did these participants see teacher education as a profession for white people because they were taught by white teachers? Beynon and Toohey say, "Personal and individual inadequacies may be constructed impediments to the participation of individuals from particular groups to particular jobs" (p. 454).

How can we explain the relationship of Jane's lack of self-confidence, after nearly two decades of teaching, to the high level of confidence expressed by John, who has taught English for only two years in a similar geographical region? How confident can NNESTs expect to feel when they are learning and teaching English in their home countries? And what decisions do they make in teaching and learning from traditional texts (e.g., Shakespeare) and the current idiomatic expressions used in the textbooks that are gaining recognition in China and the Middle East? Could the lack of confidence be attributed to nervousness and anxiety in believing that after completing teacher education, they would be professionally prepared to enter Canadian classrooms as teachers?

Liu (2004) talks about his embarrassment at being marked as an outsider because he was using archaic expressions from his English literature textbooks when he first arrived in America as a graduate student. He described himself, in his beginning days as a student, as feeling "ashamed and uncomfortable in daily communication..." (p. 27). The biggest factor for Liu was in finding balance between his Asian culture and the American culture.

*Cultural Adaptation.* NNEST professionals who reflect on their struggles to adapt to Western cultural norms (Liu, 2004; Kamhi-Stein, 2002; Braine, 2004) recall the fluctuations of their confidence levels as they pursued their higher education. Liu defines the three stages of his professional development "adaptive cultural transformation" (p.28) as puzzlement, endeavour, and empowerment, after he came to America to pursue a graduate degree in foreign and second-language education. In the first stage, puzzlement, he tries to deal with this question: "How did I feel when my self-confidence was challenged by school expectations in the target culture?" (p.26). He recalls the difference between the spoken language in America and the kind of English he read—and spoke—from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century British and American literature. In particular, he writes about his confusion with ordinary and mundane tasks, such as ordering a meal at McDonald's and not knowing how to respond to the question, "To go?"

Min described her initial experiences of living in Canada, writes:

We moved to [a Canadian city], and I first worked in a factory for 8 months. No one was helping us. I was not thinking about teaching. There were special weekend programs offered by the [city's] school division. I could do the program over four

full summers. My friends told me about these programs. But I had to support my brother because he was younger. I had to look for other jobs.

Then one of my friends told me about the TA [teaching assistant] positions at the school division. I applied there and got the job. I thought about returning to school to become a teacher many times, but I was the only one here to look after my brother. (Min, this text p.75)

Lisa, describing her discomfort when she first arrived in Canada and had to speak with Canadians, writes:

When I first came to Canada, I was very intimidated. But when the time went by, I felt more comfortable. To live a long time in Canada [*sic*] makes me feel more confident in English and comfortable when I do conversation with Canadian people. (Lisa, this text p.73)

Nadia described some of initial difficulties of settling in Canada, "Listening to native speakers' slang language, listening to native speakers' pronunciation, experiencing new culture, new points of view... Maybe [I need assistance in] recognizing some vocabulary for food items, culture concepts" (Nadia, this text p.47).

In Liu's second stage of adaptive cultural transformation, *endeavour*, he addresses the question: How did I attempt to develop adaptive cultural transformation competence and to create multiple identities appropriate for different communities?" (p.26). In this phase he works on communicating effectively in the target culture, by expanding his social identity to include the new sets of habits, values and social norms of the target culture. This stage is illustrated by the challenges Liu faced of coping in the Western classroom, where professors used various teaching styles, assigned large amounts of pre-

reading material for each class, and employed various assessment techniques. He was also challenged by the "outspokenness" of his fellow students (p. 30). Some of the international student (Jane, Jack, Charles) participants may well be at this stage as they express their thoughts of adapting to Canadian lifestyle.

Jane commented:

I was confident of myself when I was in my country. I knew the weaknesses of my people, so I knew how to support them. Now I am not very confident of my teaching abilities in Canada, even though I have taught English for many years. (Jane, this text p.51)

Jack had this to say about being in Canada:

In Canada it is multicultural, so I get to see new points of view. In my country it is one people, and everyone thinks the same. In Canada there are people to support you if you have problems. When I first came here, I met people who helped me to understand the city and find things. Some of these people were not even from my country. This is what I like about being in Canada. (Jack, this text p. 53)

Charles commented:

I think it's a difficult thing to be a NNEST in Canada. There is so much competition. There are not too many jobs, and I think the first choice for employer is the native speaker. My friends say that I am a good teacher, but friends cannot give me a job. (Charles, this text p. 67)

Similarly, NNESTs wrote about the efficacy of Canadian teacher education programs in comparison to the training programs in their homeland:

In general, the education in Canada focuses on encouraging the students to produce and demonstrate their understanding of new knowledge. Therefore the students will improve their speaking and writing skills and the ability to apply their knowledge to the real world. Canada has a much more useful and practical approach to teaching. (Charles, this text p.68)

Sonya praised her teacher-training program, saying that it was more practical and beneficial for the teacher who knows the subject matter:

In my country, the education and the training programs provide the students with a large amount of information and knowledge. Therefore they know lots of things in various areas. However, for the way of managing classrooms, Canada uses more practical ways. Practising lots of activities, free discussion, involving in lots of projects or real tasks or examples are important features of Canadian training. (Sonya, this text p.57)

Liu describes his third stage of transcultural adjustment when he asks himself how he, as a non-native speaker, empowers his students to learn. This stage of *empowerment*, or winning students through their trust and admiration of him happened after he had secured the job of teaching English composition to NNEST undergraduate and graduate students. He describes in this stage his students entering a class and being surprised to see a NNEST as their teacher, and then how they came to accept him as their instructor, especially after seeing the detailed comments and suggestions Liu wrote on their first assignment. Min and Denise may well be the only two participants in Liu's description of the third stage of transcultural adjustment. They had worked at non-teaching jobs when they first came to Canada, but their ultimate goal was to work in the school environment.

Though Min decided in the early 80's that the stakes were too high to pursue a teaching degree due to financial and personal responsibilities, Denise has been living and working in Canada for 10 years and she has benefitted from speaking English regularly at work and in the larger community. These two factors and her high confidence level have been conducive to her aspirations of becoming a language teacher.

While Liu's three-stage model of cultural adaptation in the West appears to follow a linear-like progression of cultural adaptation, it is more of an indication of his personal reflections of the numerous adaptations that he himself made to fit in America socially and academically. The participants in this study did not provide the kind of responses needed to fully reflect on and compare with the kinds of challenges that Liu faced, so unfortunately, there was not enough data to conclude that the participants' responses actually reflected the stages described by Liu.

According to Lazaraton's (2004) study on NNESTs' incidental cultural knowledge, it is not so much what the teacher knows, but what they do when they do not know. In Canada it would be perfectly acceptable for a teacher to tell students that they do not know the answer, but in Amin's teaching experience in Toronto, it was disempowering for a NNEST to be ignorant.

Whatever cultural context the NEST or NNEST is raised in, she/he will be adequate purveyors of that culture. A NEST raised in an English-speaking country is exposed to the cultural literacy that is often represented in language-training books.

Being raised in Canada, I believe that I am learning about different cultures all the time. Observing annual events, like Halloween, Christmas, Thanksgiving, St. Patrick's Day, St. Jean Baptiste, and Black History Month, and reading cross-cultural newspapers

helps me understand the world from various geographical perspectives. Hockey is a favourite national sport in Canada, but I do not have the interest to learn about it, so if my students ask me about the game, I would look for someone who knows hockey to address the students.

Similarly, both teachers and students can work together in a class context to negotiate meaning and adapt cultural context to their lives. As Lazaraton remarks, "Second-language educators can no longer afford to teach culture as a set of disembodied facts because culture is both meaning and identity" (p. 216). In her article on identifying ways in which teachers display cultural knowledge, she reports that it is rare for teachers to understand the details of every cultural topic in an ESL class.

So what should NNESTs do if they are confronted with Canadian or other cultural information of which they are unsure? One thing they could do is develop techniques to prepare for such scenarios in their teacher education programs, such as dealing with teacher anxiety. NNESTs' anxiety should be addressed early in teacher education programs. There should be some way for these teachers to express, acknowledge, and vent their concerns about language proficiency and cultural knowledge, so that there is a forum to discuss solutions to remedy these concerns. On the other hand, NNESTs may not vent their concerns, as doing so would be publicizing their deficiencies to their colleagues.

For some NNESTs, the teacher trainee program could be the first program where they stand up and make a presentation in front of native speakers. A colleague friend of mine recalled listening to a presentation of NNESTs in her graduate class and finding their presentations only 50% to 70% comprehensible. It would be interesting to find out

how NESTs react to their NNEST colleagues in their classes, but this question is beyond the scope of this paper. Also, there are NNESTs who, upon completing teacher-training programs, return to their homeland and obtain a "better" job there; however, none of the participants in this study expressed desire to return to their homelands to live.

Though NNESTs' English language competence is internalized, they may not be as skillful in their use of the second language because of a lack of confidence. One way to build self-confidence for preservice teachers is to read some of the literature on NNEST research as well as testimonials from practising NNESTs, so that all teachers have a record of how others have overcome some of the challenges to become a teacher.

To make ends meet, some professional immigrants to Canada have taken menial jobs despite being overeducated or overqualified for these jobs, or both (Bell, 1996). Maraj's study on professional immigrants revealed that immigrants were willing to do whatever it takes to be credentialed in Canada, but other issues factored in, such as course fees and joining professional organizations that limited their decision-making to retrain. Min's case matched this scenario; however, when she later secured a teaching assistant position at an elementary school, she came close to fulfilling her chosen occupation of working with children.

The majority of the NNESTs interviewed in this study are not desperate to find employment in any menial job. In fact, most of the NNESTs said they would accept a career related to an ESL teaching or counselling position in an international or refugee centre, which might open up possibilities for classroom teaching in the future. They did not express any desire to work in any job unrelated to teaching English.

*Self-Image.* Although there were some concerns about competing for jobs with NESTs, participants were generally positive about their self-image as language teachers of new immigrants to Canada. They are not planning to teach in the K-12 public schools, for which they know they would have to enrol in a post-baccalaureate B.Ed program. Instead, the majority of these teachers want to teach adult ESL because they see teaching immigrant and adult beginner levels as an attainable goal. Some NNESTs are planning to study for a master's degree upon completing teacher-training programs, a step that will address some of the areas of professional preparation they identified that they need (e.g., understanding the Canadian education system, more education on cultural issues, and more language training). NNESTs were asked what kinds of activities made an impact on their self-images (Table 5). More education on culture issues was the most important concern followed by more volunteer teaching opportunities and attention to future job prospects. Some of the NNEST participants in this study came from countries where a dominant language and culture exists, such as Nadia from Kuwait or Jack from China:

In Canada it is multicultural, so I get to see new points of view. In my country it is one people, and everyone thinks the same. In Canada there are people to support you if you have problems. When I first came here, I met people who helped me to understand the city and find things. Some of these people were not even from my country. This is what I like about being in Canada. (Jack, this text p.53)

Not all NNESTs believed that working with native-English speakers or receiving more attention because of their non-native status as being very important. Denise had this to say about an ideal language status of her instructors, "My preference would depend on the ability of the teacher, not whether he/she was a native-speaker or not. So it would

depend on the individual and not on the fact if he or she was native or not” (Denise, this text p. 61).

Jennifer, Reema, and Charles preferred an even number of NESTs/NNESTs instructors whereas Nadia and Sonya favoured mainly native-speaker instructors. John, Jack, Jane, Farrah and Lisa would incline toward all native-speaker instructors in their teacher training programs, “By having all-native-speakers, I can improve my English more quickly. Moreover, it makes me be able to regard myself as a native-speaker” (Lisa, this text p.73). Four participants did not want extra attention because of their non-native speaker status. Another four participants believed that more courses should be designed for non-native speakers, but only one mentioned that having extra attention for NNESTs was not important, leaving seven participants undecided about the importance of having more courses designed for non-native speakers. Possible reasons may be that either NNESTs were unclear of the objectives of special courses designed for them, or perhaps they were reflecting on their own emerging teacher identity by not wanting to be labelled a “NNEST.”

Table 5: Activities NNESTs' identify as impacting their self-image as ESL teachers

| Activity                                          | Important | Not important |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| More education on culture issues                  | 10        | 1             |
| More volunteer teaching opportunities             | 9         | 1             |
| More language training                            | 8         | 1             |
| More attention given to future job prospects      | 9         | 2             |
| Mentoring with native English speakers            | 7         | 3             |
| More continuing education                         | 6         | 2             |
| More group work with native English speakers      | 5         | 3             |
| More attention given to non-native-speaker status | 4         | 4             |
| More courses designed for non-native speakers     | 4         | 1             |
| Other                                             | -         | -             |

When NNESTs were asked about what makes an ideal teacher, they listed teacher qualities that were more descriptive of the personality of the teacher than of the teacher's knowledge and teaching credentials. NNESTs were critical of their language proficiency and lack of cultural information about multicultural Canada; however, these deficits do not affect their self-images as future teachers in Canada. NNESTs are well aware of their limitations in teaching at the K-12 public schools. They know that a teaching degree will require a bachelor's degree in education as well as practical experience, but none of the teachers have selected the B.Ed route. Instead, they chose an adult teacher education program.

They listed an array of qualities that endear teachers to their students. Open-mindedness, humour, being a good storyteller, patience, sacrifice, and enthusiasm about

teaching were named as some of the most desirable qualities, rather than a teacher's speaking capabilities, accent, and pronunciation—the very qualities they critique in themselves. Jennifer said:

I see myself as a teacher who will work hard to motivate my students. I will prepare effective lesson plans with lots of activities. My students will see that my classroom is very interesting. I will have lots of charts on the walls, and I will make my classroom inviting. (Jennifer, this text p.43)

John commented:

I see myself as a teacher who is willing to help the students, to be able to provide the students' needs and wants. I am open to learning from my students. I am capable of becoming a good teacher and to teach all levels of students. I have a strong English knowledge background. (John, this text p.46)

Reema said:

I see myself as a teacher who is professionally prepared to teach. I did many courses and programs that were designed specifically for teaching English. I like working with people from different countries. (Reema, this text p.66)

In the same vein, Charles said, "I see myself as a teacher who is emotional and likes to communicate with students"; Lisa said, "I see myself as a teacher who will not always focus on grammar and reading because this is what I used to do in Korea"; and Farrah said, "I see myself as a teacher who is devoted to teaching."

NNESTs expressed uncertainty about employment, even after having the credentials to teach adult English as a second language because they did not see an emphasis on employment in their teacher education programs. Participants felt that they would face

difficulty in getting a job once they had completed the steps to be credentialed. They anticipate competition from educated native-speaker applicants, who may have a better chance of securing employment in both ESL and EFL settings. Most said they could get jobs teaching in public schools upon graduation in their home countries, so the idea of job-hunting may be a novel experience.

Some of the participants said they would continue their education in the event that they do not secure a job soon after graduation. Participants mentioned enrolling in master's degree programs because they would get to continue to practise and receive feedback on their skill development. Being prepared for a teaching career is the main objective for the majority of the participants, so they are not going to work at menial jobs; however, some are willing to take any kind of job related to teaching ESL students, as long as it is a step towards a job teaching English. Some participants mentioned working with immigrant women or in immigrant or refugee centres.

NNESTs revealed that other forces have led to their positive self-images about being teachers. They stated that family members (parents and siblings) and former teachers, native and non-native speakers, influenced them to become teachers. With the exception of Farrah, who began to learn English as a subject in primary school, most of the participants stated that they began learning English as a subject in Grade 7 or higher. Min came to Canada at a time when there was little research on NNESTs. Subsequently, these foreign-trained teachers pursued a bachelor's degree in education, found work as teaching assistants, or left the educational field to work in menial jobs (Elliot, 1989).

Although NNESTs mentioned some form of anxiety about their future plans to become teachers, perhaps it should be emphasized, like the desirable teacher qualities

they stated that teaching is about more than having the right pronunciation, speech, ethnicity, and grammar knowledge. It is about having the right professional qualifications and that special something else that endears teachers to us. In fact, the important teacher qualities listed by NNESTs were interpersonal skills: a love for teaching, patience, having faith in oneself, being a good storyteller, friendly, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, responsible, able to take criticism, adaptable, understanding of other cultures, having good management skills, and having a good understanding of students' emotional needs.

Many of the answers provided by participants do not seem to directly address self-image and confidence in breadth and depth, and the conclusions derived from the responses may indeed change over the course of their studies due to a number of considerations. Regarding self-image, participants may have expressed their thoughts on what they consider to be the right kind of teacher in the West and that a Western-trained teacher is the ideal type of teacher. More time could have been spent interviewing teachers to flesh-out some of their prior knowledge, beliefs and expectations of the ideal teacher. In particular, it would have been useful to know what is considered an ideal teacher and classroom in their homeland and how does this differs from perceptions in Canada. An open-ended interview with participants would have enabled them to expand on issues of self-image. Also, because studying NNESTs is still a recent phenomenon and with different perspectives of NNESTs still under consideration, researchers have yet to make general conclusions out of a few limited-in-scope studies. Moreover, this particular group of multicultural NNESTs demonstrates that it is hard to form general conclusions given the multi-faceted nature of each NNEST. Also, I believe that to better understand NNESTs it will take greater participation and a variety of information gathering

techniques (for example, journal entries, electronic discussions, long interviews, surveys); involve a lot more NNESTs across Canada; and include the perspectives of ESL students, program administrators, and native-speakers as well as insights from NNESTs teaching other specialties. I believe that studies done on NNESTs in the last ten years may be repeated with new groups of NNESTs to see whether previous study results are applicable to new groups of NNESTs.

I believe that the methodology of collecting data about NNESTs at different phases of their career building processes is also needed to gain a better understanding of how their perceptions are constructed. Finally, the sample size could include more NNESTs although in some settings it may not be possible.

### *Interpretation of Drawings*

NNESTs' drawings of themselves in future teaching scenarios reveal information about their classrooms. Feldman (1990) states that the best way to begin interpretation of a work of art is to take advantage of the largest amount of visual evidence. He adds that meaningful criticism can be achieved if the critic also knows some background information about the artist. Students' desks were arranged in small groups or a U-shaped formation and accommodated between 10 and 18 students. Teachers' desks (or tables) were either to one side at the front of the classroom, in the front middle of the classroom, or missing in the sketches. Overall, some drawings looked rushed and lacked clues for envisioning a future teaching scenario, while others reflected details to give a clearer picture of teaching.

It is interesting to note that NNESTs who identified themselves as parents had more detail in their classrooms. Jane, Reema, and Farrah (a trained public school teacher) had

the busiest-looking classrooms, with wall charts, posters, maps, and resource materials. The range of detail and style drawn by the participants are not unlike classrooms in the Canada. Elementary classrooms are decorated with posters, charts, and student work, while little is displayed on high-school classroom walls. Adult language classrooms are devoid of decorations and student work, and often audiovisual materials are locked away in a storage room.

In summary, participants drew Western-style communicative classrooms. There is communication in the classrooms and colour on the walls (maps, charts). Desks or tables are arranged either U-shaped or as round tables (not rows), in circle or group formations. Class sizes are small, between 12 and 18 students. The teacher is not necessarily doing teacher-fronted lecturing. The teacher is neatly dressed, and the agenda is shared with students. There are welcoming messages on the blackboard. There is technology in the classrooms. Posters on the walls represent multiple cultures. There are lots of realia (real props to enhance or introduce a lesson), reference books, and audiovisual equipment in the classroom.

Participants' drawings of the future teaching scenario might be an indication of what is expected of them in the dominant Western culture. Their depictions did not have the elements of the learning and teaching environments of their homelands (Eastern classes are noted for large classes and for teachers, not students, moving from classroom to classroom). Unfortunately, there was not enough data to fully explore the drawings. Asking participants to explain their drawings verbally would have enriched the data needed to explore their rationale for their drawings.

Advances in science, technology, business, and tourism have caused a number of countries to consider introducing English earlier, at the primary level in government schools. All of the participants stated that they were taught by native speakers and non-native speakers in their homeland. Consequently, it is safe to say that before these preservice teachers embarked on second-language teacher education programs in Canada, they believed that through hard work and preparation (e.g., teacher education, language training, a better understanding of Canadian norms and taboos) they too could attain their career goal of teaching English in Canada. Now that they are in such programs with native speakers, NNESTs are faced with a new sense of awareness that being professionally prepared to teach English in Canada calls for refining one's educational and career goals to reflect the new realities of living in Canada.

### *Summary of Findings*

Based on the findings and analysis, the following summarizes the linguistic skills and professional issues concerning NNESTs.

No two NNESTs are alike. NNESTs represent a variety of backgrounds: countries of origin; status of English and their access to English in their homelands; age when they were first introduced to English; how often they use English; contact with native and non-native speakers; prior experience of using English in the workplace; motivations for studying in adult teacher education programs; and career and educational goals.

Seven out of 12 NNESTs in this study were international students, who were more concerned about their linguistic skills and lack of knowledge of Canadian cultural information than about writing effective lesson plans, teaching grammar rules, and

learning about Canadian culture. Even when their written and oral expressions were deemed satisfactory, NNESTs were concerned about their accent and pronunciation. Reema, a Canadian citizen, expressed concern that she was not regarded as an effective teacher because of her pronunciation.

The data suggests that NNESTs with longer residencies in Canada, but no Canadian teaching experience, may feel more confident in teacher education programs than those with long overseas teaching experience. With the latter, English is regarded as a foreign language, as is the case with Denise, Jack, and Jane. Farrah (from the Fiji Islands), Jennifer and Lisa (both from Singapore) expressed confidence with their English, due to their home countries' recognition of English as an official language.

Participants said that, in addition to their current teacher-training program, it might be preferable to study at a master's level to be fully qualified to teach English in Canada.

The majority of NNESTs expressed more confidence teaching at a Beginner's level ESL class than in advanced classes.

Participants with more extensive teaching or working histories (Denise, Farrah, Nadia, Jane, Reema) expressed more clarity about their teaching goals than participants who had informal (and fewer years of) teaching experiences in overseas private schools.

NNESTs want to build their confidence and feel appreciated for their participation in adult second-language teacher education programs. Although they expressed satisfaction with their programs, they did make a few suggestions as to where improvements can be made to acknowledge their professional struggles. These included classroom activities to acknowledge their professional concerns and perspectives; direction and guidance on how NNESTs can grow professionally (including mentoring, seminars, and coursework);

and volunteer teaching opportunities for those who would like to gain Canadian work experience and who plan to reside in Canada upon completing their programs of study.

## Chapter Six: Conclusion

### *Teacher Programs Affect NNEST Confidence and Self-Image*

This study examined the professional self-image and confidence issues of 12 non-native English speakers as they pursued second-language teacher education programs. Any conclusions generated from this research should be deemed tentative and suggestive of further research in the area of NNESTs in teacher education programs.

The findings revealed that second-language teacher education programs are not meeting the needs of NNESTs, due to a number of variables. Second-language teacher education programs offer instruction to a mixed group of people with various levels of English language proficiency and teaching experience: local students, international students, experienced teachers, novice teachers, and those with no formal teacher education. Teaching ESL is not the function of teacher education programs; yet for some non-native speakers the selection of courses offered is seen to be a continuation of English language support programs offered at the university's language centre. Non-native speakers are in these programs to boost their own language proficiency levels as they pursue other courses of study.

Self-confidence levels of NNESTs ranged from not very confident to very confident. These teacher trainees see these programs as complementary to their courses of study, and they feel a sense of accomplishment that they could complete a short accredited teacher education program that is offered by university personnel. Non-native speakers

are learning teaching methodology and doing partner and group activities with native speakers, and this collaboration boosts their confidence. The number of teaching years in their homeland did not necessarily make them more confident of their teaching abilities. Participants expressed positive remarks about these teacher education programs and about how much they have learned in the art of teaching.

Indeed, NNESTs were found to be unique individuals with a number of variables that contributed to their individual background. NNESTs had a general sense of what areas of professional preparation they needed to work at, to teach English in Canada, but because of perceived deficits in their speaking skills and cultural knowledge, and with their lack of Canadian credentials and with no follow-up after the program, the future for graduates of these programs is unknown.

The English language teacher education programs are too short for NNEST participants to gain the confidence, skills, and professional knowledge needed to teach in Canada. NNESTs could continue to blend into Canadian society and further develop their linguistic and cultural proficiency by learning the habits, customs, and behaviours typical in Canada. They could also enroll in longer teacher education programs (such as the B.Ed program) offering focused pedagogy and practica that are longer, supervised, and more numerous. In the meanwhile, NNESTs should continue to demonstrate their strengths by seeking ways to be involved in the larger community and should continue to work on what they perceive as weaknesses in, or barriers to, their careers. They must realize that if there were to be any developments in their career paths, they themselves would be the agents of that change.

In spite of varying levels of confidence, NNESTs project a positive self-image as future teachers. Participants view themselves as good teachers because they already possess some of the inner qualities and characteristics of teachers (e.g., being a good storyteller, organized, hardworking, and having a desire to motivate others). However, they are also cognizant of some of the tasks ahead in preparing for a teaching career. To address this consideration, they listed a variety of suggestions to build confidence and improve the image of NNESTs in preservice teacher education programs.

Through second-language teacher education and graduate studies programs, NNESTs become aware of their perceived deficits in becoming effective language teachers because they are in classes with native speakers on their own turf. NNESTs should be asked some important questions before taking teacher education courses: What are their career goals? Are they planning to work in Canada? Do they desire to improve their professional teaching skills, or simply to increase their language proficiency and confidence as they learn about how to teach English?

More research should be conducted on how to identify and take advantage of NNESTs' strengths in preservice teacher education programs. Because non-native speakers in preservice English language teacher education programs represent differing linguistic proficiency, educational backgrounds, and personal and professional plans, it is difficult to assume whether they will become language teachers at all. Most, if not all, will be satisfied that they were able to complete a teacher education program that taught them so much about Western teaching methodologies in a few short months. In the meanwhile, all stakeholders in institutions that teach language instruction and teacher

education programs could work together in addressing what it means to be proficient in a language and what makes an effective language teacher.

### *Implications for Preservice English Language Teacher Education*

None of the teacher trainees who participated in this study expressed interest in enrolling in a Bachelor of Education degree program, which would prepare them to teach in the K-12 public schools. More than half of the participants were international students, who did not state whether they would stay in Canada or return to their homelands. Therefore the suggestions given would be applicable to teacher trainees in adult English language teacher education programs, such as CTESL and TESL. Both preservice and in-service training programs can address linguistic proficiency issues and teacher professionalism. Concerning how to boost NNESTs' confidence and self-image, I will review some of the recommendations offered by the participants, listed at the end of the findings, and add some of my own thoughts.

*Initial Assessment of NNESTs.* Instructors and administrators can place greater emphasis on NNESTs' input through needs assessments at the beginning of the program through small and large group discussions, and through the use of surveys that gauge the thoughts, concerns, and issues to be brought forward. Most of the information I obtained about the participants was through the questionnaire. Asking future NNESTs to fill out a questionnaire, revised from the one used in this study, may be useful in dealing with NNESTs from different backgrounds, immigration status, and professional goals. Instructors and curriculum coordinators of CTESL or TESL programs would have an opportunity to collect statistics on NNESTs and address some of the key points and

concerns raised in the questionnaire. The questionnaire would also help the non-native speaker outline or establish goal setting, so that upon completion of the program they are able to move on to their next stage of career building through effective decision-making.

*Confidence-building.* The majority of NNESTs expressed satisfaction with their CTESL/TESL programs, but they would like some recognition as non-native speakers who learned English well enough to consider a future in teaching English. Therefore some confidence-building activities could be added to CTESL and TESL course objectives, to appreciate the diversity in the range of students in class—from the nonconfident and professionally unprepared NNEST to the nonconfident but experienced one.

Instructors in credentialing programs may want to begin their courses and programs with an open discussion of language issues in their first class. After all, without an open forum to discuss language proficiency issues with all students, NNESTs may not have any other opportunity to listen to others and discuss their concerns and perspectives.

Building empathy in the classroom by encouraging discussion on the different educational systems of countries represented in the class by NNESTs. NNESTs could role-play teacher/student dynamics in the foreign language classroom familiar to them. NNESTs could also discuss some of the positive and negative teaching strategies they have encountered in their homelands and then compare them to Canadian norms as experienced by native-speakers. NNEST and NESTs could work together to identify how to share and respond to the differences in the educational systems around the world. One benefit for NESTs in this type of collaboration is in acquiring cultural information about what might be expected of them should they decide to teach overseas.

Having a NNEST practitioner address the whole class about his/her professional journey, including the personal and professional triumphs along the way, may create a climate of respect for diversity in a teaching staff.

Exposing students to professional organizations and journals that address NNEST issues, such as TESL Canada, TESL Manitoba, the Manitoba Teachers' Society's special area groups, and TESOL's NNEST Caucus may direct NNESTs to the latest research on linguistic and professional issues for and by NNESTs. With those resources they can read further on issues, perspectives, and concerns about NNESTs worldwide.

*Formal TESL Training and Certification in EFL Contexts.* The spread of English around the world is evident in the numerous job vacancies advertised for English teachers; and some of the employers specifically request native-speakers. To meet the demand for teachers overseas and emphasize the importance of professional preparation for all English language teachers, formal TESL training and certification could be offered in EFL contexts through exchanges or programs in the West serving international teachers—thereby enabling EFL teachers to have contact with native language speakers to improve conversational skills and to be exposed to Western pedagogy.

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### Web sites

Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL Caucus Official Web site. Retrieved from  
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## Appendixes

### *Appendix A Explanation of Study for Participants*

Title of Thesis: Non-native English-Speaking Teacher's Professional Self-Image and Confidence in Pursuing Recredentialing

Who am I, and what do I want?

My name is Ameena H. Sahib. I am a Master of Education student at the University of Manitoba. I have taught English as a second language in Saudi Arabia and in British Columbia, and I have tutored both adults and children. I am planning to conduct a study about issues pertaining to the non-native English-speaking teacher in Winnipeg. Since you have been involved in an education program to prepare yourself for entering the teaching profession, I invite you to participate in this study, which is a case study research approach in examining your reflections regarding your personal and professional experiences in Canada as you prepared for teaching. I am particularly interested in your self-image perceptions about engaging in recredentialing programs in Winnipeg.

*What is a NNEST?*

The acronym NNEST, or non-native English-speaking teacher, is a label used to describe the English language status of a teacher who teaches English. The teacher is either bilingual or multilingual. English is not the teacher's first language. Many studies are being conducted to examine the different concerns, issues, and perspectives of NNESTs with respect to language proficiency and employment, among other concerns. With the increase of English spoken around the world, many speakers learn English in their home countries where English may have official status, such as an official language

(e.g., the Philippines), taught in the public schools as a foreign language (e.g., in Libya, English is offered starting at Grade 9), and in situations where English is used for business, technology, and international communication, but it is not a language of daily communication in that country.

What does participation in the study involve?

I am asking you to participate in a case study involving a questionnaire, a short interview, and a focus group meeting for all participants for examining your self-image perceptions of preparing for a teaching career in Canada. I would like to conduct a meeting with you at a mutually convenient time in the next 2 months and ask you some questions regarding successes and challenges you face in achieving your career goals in Canada. Although I have specific questions to ask, including a drawing exercise, I will also ask you to speak into an open microphone to add any further thoughts you may have regarding your experiences. In addition, all participants are invited to engage in an open discussion with their NNEST colleagues. I intend to gather enough information about you to identify key themes and patterns in your responses that will enable me to write an accurate assessment of your self-image perceptions of being a NNEST in Canada.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

Since I am bound by the privacy and confidentiality laws of the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, I will not discuss the contents of our meetings with anyone. Your name and identity will not appear anywhere in the study, but because you will be the focus of this case study, I will ask you to use a pseudonym. The questionnaire, oral interviews, and open forum discussion will be the methods of collecting data in this study. I will seek guidance from my supervisor, Dr. Seonaigh MacPherson, and two committee members, Dr. Sandra Kouritzin and Dr. Nathalie Piquemal, but they are also

bound by confidentiality laws. Your case will be referred to by your pseudonym. All the information gathered by me, including the questionnaires, audio tapes, and my notes, will be kept in a locked drawer at my home. Although I will do my best to keep the information confidential, you should know that your identity may be discovered by your colleagues because of your experiences in various programs. In the event that results of this case study are published as part of a large study about immigrant professionals, your name and identity will be protected. If required, I may change some details about you to ensure confidentiality and privacy.

Risks and benefits of participating in the study.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Also, you may refrain from answering any questions or delving into topics that are uncomfortable for you. This study does not involve physical or emotional stress, although recounting some experiences may be emotionally draining for you. Participation in this study may or may not have direct benefit to you. Your input may contribute to sociolinguistic issues of how voice, accent, identity, culture, discrimination, and employment are implicated in second-language acquisition research.

I see this study as being part of a larger study about the difficulties immigrant professionals face in securing employment in careers for which they have been trained. As Canada continues to attract immigrant professionals, it will be important to compare and contrast in detail the effectiveness of credentialing programs across Canada. Continued research in this area would furnish readers of this study how recommendations of policy change and practice are treated as a result of the data collection and analysis.

Finally, I believe that your experiences of being a non-native speaker of English in Canada may be helpful reading for other non-native speaking teachers of English who have experienced similar challenges in Canada.

Questions and further information.

If you have any questions or would like more information about this study at any time, please feel free to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ or my thesis advisor, Dr. Seonaigh MacPherson, at 474-9481.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Ameena H. Sahib

*Appendix B Participant consent form*

Research Project Title: Non-native English-Speaking Teacher's Professional Self-Image  
in Pursuing Recredentialing

Researcher: Aameena H. Sahib

Date: April 15, 2004

Dear Participant:

I am writing to ask you for your consent to participate in a study about your professional self-image and confidence perceptions of being a non-native English-speaking teacher (NNEST) who pursues credentialing in Canada.

The purpose of this research is to find out what are the professional self-image and confidence perceptions of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) who participate in credentialing programs in Canada. You have been asked to participate because you are a teacher whose first language is not English. This research is for my master's thesis study, and I am a graduate student in Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning in the Faculty of Education.

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what this research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

I have read and understood the explanation of the study about NNESTs professional self-image and confidence perceptions. I understand the study procedure. I understand that I will be participating in a questionnaire/interview during the months of April-August, 2004. During these interviews I will be relating information about my personal and professional experiences of being a NNEST professional. This information will be used to write a case study analysis of those experiences. I understand that the information I give in written and oral forms will be written in an edited version.

I understand that there will be an open microphone for me to add information to support questions asked in the questionnaire and that the tapes will be transcribed. I know that the tape can be turned off at any time in the interview. I also know that I can elect not to answer any question that makes me feel uncomfortable. I understand that the researcher will be writing notes during the interview, and she will be keeping a journal for her own reflections of the study. I understand that all NNEST participants will be invited to engage in a discussion of their experiences, a focus group meeting, as the final task in collecting data.

I understand that the researcher will present me a draft of the written version so that I may check over the information presented. I understand that confidentiality will be assured throughout the study. Once the study is completed, I understand that I cannot change any of the information.

I understand that there are no risks involved in this study. Benefits include the opportunity to receive feedback about the study results and a greater understanding about issues relating to NNESTs.

I understand that I am free to discontinue my participation in this study at any time without prejudice or consequence. At no time will any closely identifying information (such as my name and identity) be included in any documents generated from this study. All information received from me will be kept in an area to which only the researcher will have access. I understand that I will receive a copy of the final edited version of this study.

My signature on this form indicates that I have understood to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive my legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time and/or refrain from answering any questions I prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. My continued participation should be as informed as my initial consent, so I should feel free to ask for clarification of new information throughout my participation.

Ameena H. Sahib

Phone

This research has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research and Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the above-mentioned person or the Human Ethics Secretariat at

474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your own records and reference.

Sincerely,

Ameena H. Sahib

Participant's signature

Date

---

Researcher's signature

Date

### *Appendix C Questionnaire*

This study will address the following sample questions within each research question. If

you need more space to answer, more space is provided at the back of this booklet.

1. How, if at all, do non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) perceive the

differences between the NEST and NNEST with respect to:

Employability

Strengths and weaknesses

Teaching style

(a) What benefits (if any) are you experiencing as a NNEST in Canada?

(b) What obstacles (if any) are you experiencing as a NNEST in Canada?

(c) Describe your contact with the following groups of English speakers in your homeland: (Check one for each group)

Native speaker    Non-native speaker

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Frequently

Daily

(d) Could you elaborate on the nature/context of the contacts that you had in your homeland.

(e) Do you believe that there are differences in the way you teach English and the way a native speaker of English teaches English in Canada? If so, in what ways would you describe those differences?

| Aspect of Teaching | Native speaker | Non-native speaker |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|

Reading

Writing

Listening

Speaking

Classroom Management

Rapport with students

Lesson Planning

Pronunciation

Cultural Knowledge

Other: (please explain)

---

2. How does the ethnic or linguistic self-image of NNESTs affect decision-making concerning their entering or recredentialing in the teaching profession?

(a) Draw a picture of yourself teaching a class of ESL students. Label your drawing.

Please select a pseudonym instead of your real name and write this on the back of both sheets.

(b) Write two paragraphs describing your drawing by beginning with the following:

An effective teacher is \_\_\_\_\_, and I see myself as a teacher who \_\_\_\_\_.

(c) Where do you think these beliefs come from?

3. What are your experiences and views about professional education and teacher education?

In answering the following questions, please give as much detailed information as possible.

(a) Describe your teacher-training program from your home country.

(b) What is your teaching specialty, and what made you choose this area of specialization?

(c) How long have you taught previously and what did you teach?

(d) What are your career aspirations in Canada?

(e) According to your academic planning, what other courses or programs do you need to complete before looking for employment?

(f) Is this your first program toward recredentialing? If not, what other courses or programs have you taken in Canada toward becoming certified to teach?

(g) What are your views about the education and training you received in your home country and the additional education and training you are required to do in Canada?

(h) What aspects of professional preparation are you hoping to improve or accomplish by taking this particular program?

(i) Identify the program you are in \_\_\_\_\_

Speaking improvement

Writing improvement

Listening improvement

Reading improvement

Understanding of education policies

Interview skills

Job placement assistance

Understanding how the education system works

Other: (please explain)

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4. What is your professional image of a good teacher and your possibilities of becoming one?

(a) Name 7 qualities of a good teacher. Name 5 teacher qualities that you will bring to the class.

5. What are your views about re-establishing yourself as a professional in Canada and the challenges connected to them?

(a) In your opinion, what do you think you need to enhance your professional image?

Activity

Important

Not Important

More education on culture issues

More continuing education

More language training

More volunteer teaching opportunities

More group work with native-English speakers

Mentoring with native-English speakers

More courses designed for non-native speakers

More attention given to your non-native-speaker status

Less attention given to your non-native-speaker status

More attention given to future job prospects

Other (Please explain)

(b) Why do you think that these are the things that you need to enhance your professional image?

(c) If you had a choice of teachers in your recredentialing courses, please rank which of the following groups of teachers you would prefer 1-5 (1 is most desirable, and 5 is least desirable).

All native speakers

Mainly native speakers

Even number of native speakers or non-native speakers

Mostly non-native speakers

All non-native speakers

(d) Please explain your first choice of teachers in question (c) above.

(e) How do you regard the *average* non-native speaking teacher?

Not very competent

Competent

Very competent

(f) How do you regard *yourself* as a non-native speaker of English?

Not very confident

Confident

Very confident

(g) What do you think affects your level of confidence?

(h) Have you ever been told by family members or friends that you cannot teach in Canada because you have deficiencies in the following areas? (Circle and rank the areas that best describe(s) your situation. (1 is of the greatest concern)

|               |                     |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| accent        | writing             | clothing style      |
| pronunciation | speaking            | age                 |
| reading       | cultural knowledge  | country of birth    |
| ethnicity     | physical appearance | language background |

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(i) If you circled any of the above, please provide details for your top three responses:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(j) How did you overcome these negative comments?

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6. How might recredentialing programs foster better self-image and professional identity for all preservice English-as-a-second-language teachers?

(a) What might help you through the recredentialing process in terms of the following:

What courses do you think you need to be certified? Please explain your answer.

What other education support would you like to see as a teacher trainee?

Biographical Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(please write the pseudonym used in your drawing)

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Country of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Upbringing/Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Languages spoken: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest level of education: \_\_\_\_\_

Proficiency in English: (Circle one in each category)

Written: Beginner Intermediate Advanced Native-like command

Spoken: Beginner Intermediate Advanced Native-like command

At what age/grade did you start learning English? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the status of English in your homeland? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the circumstance under which you used English in your homeland. (Check one in each category)

Rarely Sometimes Frequently Always

Home

School

Outside of home and school

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire

## *Appendix D Call for Participants*

If English is not your first language or mother tongue and you taught English in your home country, then you are invited to participate in a study about non-native English-speaking teachers who pursue recredentialing. (Preparing, or thinking about preparing to teach in Canada)

Who is eligible for this study?

Students in or applying to the following programs:

Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language Program (CTESL)

Bachelor of Education Program (BEd)

Post Baccalaureate Certificate (PBCE) or Diploma (PBDE) in Education

Teaching English as a Second Language Program (TESL)

Master of Education Students (MEd)

Also eligible:

Teaching Assistants in the K-12 Public School System (TA)

What will participation involve?

|             |                                                |        |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1st meeting | Questionnaire/Picture drawing/15-min interview | 2.5 hr |
| 2nd meeting | Focus group meeting of all participants        | 1 – hr |
| —————Total  |                                                | 3.5 hr |

Time frame for Participation:

3.5 hr (May-October 2004)

Contact:

Researcher: Aameena H. Sahib

E-mail:

Supervisor: Dr. Seonaigh MacPherson

University of Manitoba

Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning

Phone: 474-9481

## *Appendix E Interview Protocol*

(Complementary to the Questionnaire)

Title of Thesis: Non-native English-Speaking Teachers' Professional Self-Image and Confidence in Pursuing Recredentialing

After completing the questionnaire, each participant was given 15 mins to orally respond to the following questions:

Do you have any further thoughts about any of the following as it relates to your own recredentialing situation?

the questionnaire

reccredentialing

other concerns / thoughts

Procedure:

I first explained the question above to the participants, and then I turned on the microphone and repeated the question into the microphone. Participants had 15 min to add any information about their personal situation.

*Appendix F Focus group protocol*

Title of Thesis: Non-native English-Speaking Teachers' Professional Self-Image and Confidence in Pursuing Recredentialing

All participants will be invited to a focus group meeting. They will be given the opportunity to discuss the following questions with other participants who are pursuing recredentialing. The objective of the focus group is to hear the individual and shared successes and challenges of their fellow NNESTs and to bring out any additional and supporting information to the data collected thus far. Not all NNESTs are pursuing a similar path to recredential at this time, so it may be helpful to know the experiences and decision-making choices of their colleagues.

All of you have responded individually to the questionnaire and open-ended interview. You each have a pseudonym for the individual aspect to this study, but we will not divulge that identity. Now that you are all here together, you are considered a group of aspiring teachers who have foreign credentials. I will start this discussion by asking you the following questions:

How confident are you in becoming a successful teacher in Canada?

If you are not yet pursuing recredentialing, what will facilitate your becoming a teacher in Canada?

How, if at all, will this study affect your future decision-making about achieving your professional goals?

Are there other questions/concerns you would like to address in this meeting?

Procedure: I wrote these four questions on the board prior to the discussion. I read all the questions aloud. After reminding them to use their pseudonyms, the participants and I engaged in a discussion. We revisited a question from the questionnaire: How can recredentialing programs foster better self-image and professional identity for all preservice English-as-a-second-language teachers. A list of recommendations was generated from this discussion.

*Appendix G Letters to Administrators*

Dr. Anne Percival

May 20, 2004

Dean, Professor

Continuing Education Division

127 Continuing Education Complex

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Dr. Percival:

I am writing you to seek your permission in searching for volunteer participants from the Division of Continuing Education for my master's thesis study about immigrant professionals. My study is entitled "Non-native English-speaking Teacher's Professional Self-Image and Confidence in Pursuing Recredentialing." I will be investigating the non-native English-speaking teachers (NNEST) who taught in their home countries and who are applying to various teacher trainee programs in Manitoba.

Specifically, I am searching for NNESTs among the applicants to the Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (CTESL) Program. The volunteers are asked to participate for a total of 3 and a half hours (3.5 hr) during the months of May-October 2004, divided into the following two sessions and tasks:

2.5 hr to complete a questionnaire, a picture drawing, and a 15-min interview

1-hr focus group discussion of all participants.

The first session will occur at a mutually agreed time and place, and the second session, or focus group, will be planned after all participants have participated individually. I will be asking participants to respond to three different areas of concern: (a) the native-speaker/non-native speaker dichotomy (b) ethnic/ linguistic discrimination and intelligibility, and (c) their professional growth and employment. Attached to this letter is an explanation of the study for participants.

In addition, I will ask the participants not to reveal their identities or the identity of their institution by using a pseudonym throughout this study. Attached to this letter are a notice calling for participants for posting and a letter explaining the study to the participants. I would like to post a "call for participants" notice on bulletin boards near the continuing education office (see attached). To begin, I need permission to enter classes of CTESL students to explain the study to them and ask for volunteers. In my final report I will be referring to the applicants by their pseudonyms. I trust that you will assist me by granting me permission to search for participants in the CTESL program associated with the Division of Continuing Education.

Sincerely,

Ameena H. Sahib

Principal,

May 10, 2004

Elementary/Junior High/

High School/Collegiate

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Principal:

I am writing you to seek your permission in searching for volunteer participants in your school for my master's thesis study about immigrant professionals. My study is entitled "Non-native English-speaking Teacher's Professional Self-Image and Confidence in Pursuing Recredentialing. I will be investigating the non-native English-speaking teachers (NNEST) who taught in their home countries and who are now working as Teaching Assistants in the Manitoba public school system.

Specifically, I am searching for NNESTs among the teacher assistants in your school. The volunteers are asked to participate for a total of 3 and a half hours (3.5 hr) during the months of May-October 2004, divided into the following two sessions and tasks:

2.5 hr to complete a questionnaire, a picture drawing, and a 15-min interview

1-hr focus group discussion with all participants in this study.

The first session will occur at a mutually agreed time and place, and the second session, or focus group, will be planned after all participants have participated individually. I will be asking participants to respond to three different areas of concern: (a) the native-speaker/non-native-speaker dichotomy (b) ethnic/ linguistic discrimination and intelligibility, and (c) their professional growth and employment. Attached to this letter is an explanation of the study for participants.

In addition, I will ask the participants not to reveal their identities or the identity of their institution by using a pseudonym throughout this study. Attached to this letter are a notice calling for participants for you to post in the school and a letter explaining the study to the participants. To begin, I need your permission to call a meeting of all teaching assistants in your school so that I can explain the study to them and ask for volunteers. In my final report I will be referring to the participants by their pseudonyms.

I trust that you will be able to assist me by granting me permission to search for participants among the teaching assistants in your school.

Sincerely,

Ameena H. Sahib

Surname:

Given Names:

Place of Birth

Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Manitoba

Vancouver Community College

University of Victoria

Degrees Awarded:

B Ed                      University of Victoria

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