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## Cultural Identity Development in Second Language Teacher Education: Toward a Negotiated Model

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## Cultural Identity Development in Second Language Teacher Education: Toward a Negotiated Model

### Abstract

This is a two-phase study toward understanding the cultural identity development of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers when they participated in cultural negotiation programs and developing a negotiated model of cultural identity development for the second language teacher education programs. To such ends, the analysis of the narratives authored by five experienced and four novice EFL teachers was done by using Wenger's (1998) community of practice and Pennington's (2014) TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) teacher identity model to track the cultural identity development of the EFL teachers during the cultural negotiation sessions. Then, by meticulously examining the theoretical and empirical underpinnings about cultural identity including the theories and previous empirical studies along with the results obtained from the first phase of the study, we developed a negotiated model of cultural identity development for the EFL teachers. The model is a theoretical one which can be applied to different second language teacher education programs to develop the cultural identity of the language teachers by participating in negotiation sessions. The study concluded with some implications for second language teacher education programs to develop the cultural identity of the EFL teachers.

### Keywords

Cultural Identity, Narrative Analysis, Negotiation, Teacher Education

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## Cultural Identity Development in Second Language Teacher Education: Toward a Negotiated Model

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### Introduction

Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) which is the research focus of many scholars from the early 1970s until now (Burns & Richards, 2009) is not just about teachers and their education (Kumaravadivelu, 2012), but it is an amalgamation of many factors and issues which should be organized and addressed to have a prosperous SLTE program. This led to an exploration by the applied linguists to delve into different aspects such as teacher self-development, experience, values, beliefs and assumptions, and identity which may bring about a successful SLTE program and respectively, prosperous second language (L2) teachers (e.g., Borg, 2006; Johnston, 2003; Senior, 2006). Among those factors, language teacher identity has been given attention as a way to open up a new horizon to understand language teacher professional development (Pennington & Richards, 2016) from different points of views and with different approaches (Rashidi & Meihami, 2017).

The definitions for identity are varied depending on time and space (Norton, 2000), and the ways in which one negotiates relationships to the world (Pennycook, 2001); engages in human activities based on discourses, systems of power, and knowledge in regulation to social

values (Morgan, 2004); and performs in a specific society (Gee, 2000). The range of the definitions for identity indicate that it is both an individual and a socially oriented concept that is created bidirectionally. Such a bidirectional path can lead to a negotiation of self in which an individual conveys his/her values, beliefs, and assumptions to a social network (Heller, 1987). When this issue is added to the cultural variations existing among different individuals, the cultural identity of the individuals, including the L2 teachers, will be at the center of attention.

Cultural identity is defined as “an umbrella construct to encompass, or subsume, related identity groups such as nationality, race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, regional identity, ethnolinguistic identity, political affiliation, and (dis)ability” (Chen & Lin, 2016, p. 2). Similar to identity, cultural identity may be negotiable (Yagi & Kleinberg, 2011). Given the importance of negotiation in cultural identity development, it is necessary to define it. According to Strauss (1978), negotiation is a way to accomplish things. The point is that negotiation has something in its essence that interaction does not have, and it is the agreement that is involved in the negotiation, but it is not necessarily a part of interaction. Strauss (1978) uses the metaphor of actor to show how cultural identity can be negotiated among individuals. As actors have different influences on each other’s role in forwarding a scenario, different individuals in a context have such influence on one another. L2 teachers who are involved in various contexts with different stakeholders such as L2 learners may be involved in a cultural identity negotiation in such contexts.

The cultural identity development of L2 teachers is thought to be a crucial issue in L2 teacher education (Menard-Warwick, 2008; Rashidi & Meihami, 2019). As stated by Duff and Uchida (1997) the discussions about cultural and ethnolinguistic issues are very common between L2 teachers and L2 learners. Hence, “problems may arise when teachers’ or students’ identities and beliefs [are] related to gender roles, nationality, ethnicity . . . or local culture” (Duff & Uchida, 1997, p. 452). Such problematic issues can be regarded as the fact that English language teaching is not culturally neutral; “rather, in the international (EFL) sphere it plays a powerful role in the construction . . . identities among teachers and students” (Duff & Uchida, 1997, p. 452). Hence, L2 teacher education programs should not ignore the importance of addressing the deserved attention to the cultural identity development of L2 teachers. In addition to what has been stated earlier, this may be due to the reason that English language teaching is referred to as a cosmopolitan act (Stanton, 2006) which means that cultural identity of all those involved in a community of English learning may influence another’s cultural identity. Consequently, it is not difficult to see English language teachers in non-native EFL contexts who are not open to new cultural identity. Moreover, as Jenkins (1996) states, identity is a socially constructed phenomenon in that it can be constructed and reconstructed when an individual participates in the social interactions. Given the Iranian context in which people have different cultural backgrounds, it will be necessary to investigate how to develop the cultural identity of the L2 teachers to be able to come up with all the cultural differences existing in the context of English teaching (e.g., the differences existing due to the nature of English teaching and those originating from the cultural differences of people). The question that follows is how English language teachers construct and reconstruct their cultural identity when addressing these issues. Therefore, in this study the researchers used narrative “knowledging concepts” (Barkhuizen, 2011) referring to the process of meaning making out of identity construction and reconstruction which happens for language teachers while producing their narratives for the purpose of investigating the cultural identity development of Iranian EFL teachers by negotiating on cultural issues to obtain a negotiated model of EFL teacher cultural identity development which can be employed in SLTE programs.

## Literature Review

### Cultural Identity Theories

Since one of the purposes of the current study was to develop a qualitative model of negotiation for the cultural identity development of the EFL teachers and due to the fact that the study was a qualitative one, we needed to meticulously review the existing theories about cultural identity to establish a good piece of knowledge about cultural identity to apply that knowledge into the model. Researchers in the communication domains approach the concept of cultural identity based on different theories. These theories focus on how negotiation may or may not lead to cultural identity development. One of the main theories of cultural identity is identity management theory (IMT) proposed by Imahori and Cupach (2005). The main idea of IMT is that the primary part and the building block of the intercultural communication is negotiation of identity. This theory of cultural identity asserts that people of different cultures can communicate with each other by negotiating their cultural identities. The theory gives the utmost consideration to the managing of competent negotiation through three phases including trial, enmeshment, and renegotiation. Through these phases the individuals feel it important to share cultural notions with others, start symbolic convergence based on the commonalities, and develop relationship with others.

One more theory addressing cultural identity is Identity Negotiation Theory (INT) proposed by Stella Ting-Toomey (2005). The main point asserted in INT is that individuals' self-image in an interaction will be developed by their sense of satisfaction with others. The theory gives the central attention to the perceptions which individuals have in an interaction. As Chen and Lin (2016) believed, "in the process of the construction of their cultural identities, people will intentionally act according to the interpersonal dynamic according to their initial perception" (p. 7). The theory focuses on two models including a cultural-ethnic identity typology model and a racial-ethnic identity development model. The two models emphasize cultural identity and the ethnic identity of the individual which is crucial in final cultural identity negotiation and the ability of the individuals to find common concepts for communication (Ting-Toomey, 2005).

Cultural Contract Theory (CCT) proposed by Jackson (2002) is another theory of cultural identity with the purpose of describing the process of cultural identity construction. The theory is based on the idea that "intercultural relationship may or may not be coordinated, depending upon the dynamics involved, such as power, boundaries, cultural loyalty, group identification, and maturity" (Jackson, 2002, p. 361). Based on this theory, there are three contracts which the cultural identity of an individual can be negotiated with others including a ready-to-sign contract, quasi-completed contract, and co-created contract. The three contracts provide a continuum for an individual based on which he/she goes from no negotiation of cultural identity to negotiation of cultural identity. Hence, it can be stated that the CCT asserts that cultural identity can be immutable, partially mutable, or fully mutable which is directly associated with the context and participants.

Orbe (1998) has proposed another theory of cultural identity called co-cultural theory; the main idea was to investigate how individuals enter an interaction with an under-represented group and dominant group members. There are different assumptions for this theory such as each society has its own power hierarchy, the powerful individuals maintain a communication system in each society, the powerful groups try to underestimate the under-represented group, and the group who has co-cultural values negotiate them with the dominant group. Accordingly, the interactions occurring among the dominant group and the under-represented group may lead, or not, to the negotiation of cultural identity. It is due to co-cultural practices which is directed from an under-represented group to the dominant group.

The final theory which we go through in this section is Cultural Identity Negotiation Theory (CINT) that is proposed by Collier and Thomas (1988) and “originally conceived as an interpretive inquiry to cultural identities” (Chen & Lin, 2016, p. 10). The main assumption of CINT is that an individual’s cultural identity negotiation can be achieved if that individual knows his/her positions and establishes a dynamic relationship to others’ cultural identity. The theory gives rise to five processes which can lead to cultural identity negotiation. Those processes include scope, salience, intensity, avowal, and ascription. Going through the five processes, one should know that cultural identities are different with regard to the scope. For instance, the cultural identity can range from rural, to local, national, regional, and global scopes. Furthermore, it should not be ignored that each and every type of cultural identity has not the same saliency or intensity during various times, spaces, and interactions. Avowal and ascription are in front of one another in that while avowal means how a group of individuals present their own cultural identity to others, ascription means how others introduce a specific cultural identity. The overall assumptions of CINT based on these five processes is that negotiation of cultural identity is very much influenced by the interactions in different contexts, during different time intervals, and by different participants.

### **Empirical Studies**

The cultural identity development of the EFL teachers is not addressed desirably, meaning that there are not many studies designed to investigate the overall identity development of the EFL teachers. In a study conducted by Lasky (2005), the development of teacher identity, teacher agency, and professional vulnerability were sought by using sociocultural theory. Lasky (2005) conducted several interviews with 10 of the secondary teachers to examine the role of vulnerability on their identity development. Based on the results of the study Lasky (2005) reported that “teachers struggled to remain openly vulnerable with their students, and to create trusting learning environments in what they described as a more managerial profession with increased accountability pressures” (p. 899). Moreover, in a study conducted by Tsui (2007), the complexity of the identity development of an EFL teacher had been investigated through collecting lived experiences of the teacher. Tsui (2007) examined the narratives authored by her participant for 6 years. The results of the study by Tsui (2007) showed that the “complex relationships between membership, competence, and legitimacy of access to practice; between the appropriation and ownership of meanings, the centrality of participation, and the mediating role of power relationships in the processes of identity formation” (p. 657) should be identified as the complexities of identity development for the EFL teachers.

In another study, Kanno and Stuart (2011) investigated the identity development of the two novice ESL teachers. By collecting and analyzing narratives and journals authored by the two teachers they found out that there is a direct relationship between the novice ESL teachers’ identity development and their practices in their classrooms. Moreover, Yuan (2016) conducted a narrative inquiry to examine the relationship between publishing academic papers and the professional identity of the novice EFL teacher educators. The results of the study indicated that the novice EFL teacher educators think of themselves as a teacher-researcher and they believe that conducting research is part of their professional identity.

There is a paucity of empirical studies on EFL teachers’ cultural identity development (Meihami & Salīte, 2019). To the best knowledge of the researchers, to date, there are only a few studies in this regard. One of the studies is a qualitative investigation done by Fichtner and Chapman (2011) in which they studied how EFL teachers affiliated themselves with a culture other than their own culture by using semi-script interviews. They found that while they embraced their culture, they did not do the same for the other culture. Moreover, Rashidi and

Meihami (2017) investigated the role of negotiation about cultural issues on the EFL student-teachers' cultural identity development. They collected and analyzed the narratives authored by three student-teachers. The results indicated that the cultural practices of the EFL student-teachers changed after participating in the negotiation sessions. By the way, as stated earlier, there is no study, to our best knowledge, which investigated the role of negotiation about cultural issues on the novice and experienced EFL teachers' cultural identity development to reach a model used in the EFL teacher education program. Due to this point and the ones we have mentioned in the introduction section, we think that it is important to address this issue.

### **Becoming an English Teacher in Multicultural Context of Iran**

I (Hussein) have started my education in English language pedagogy around 10 years ago. I have obtained my B.A, M.A., and Ph.D. in applied linguistics at three different universities located in different parts of Iran. Since then, I have been the English teacher of different students who had different first languages (including Persian, Kurdish, and Turkish) and with different cultural backgrounds. The vast differences in the first languages and cultural backgrounds of my students were due to the rich regional differences existing in Iran. Hence, the differences, especially the cultural ones, were always like obstacles in the process of English language learning. Moreover, the nature of English language which is taught in Iran as a foreign language was another cause of cultural issues in English classes. All of these issues led me to have this question about how it would be possible to develop my cultural identity along with the cultural identity of my students to reduce the barriers which I encountered in the classroom.

Hence, when I (Hussein) wanted to select a topic for my Ph.D. dissertation, I chose this one. Here, I (Hussein) asked Professor Naser Rashidi who has already done many studies in the realm of EFL teacher education to supervise my dissertation. Our aim at the time of conducting the study (early in 2017) was to develop a qualitative model of developing cultural identity of the EFL teachers. Given that, we thought that narrative inquiry could be an appropriate method to do so (De Fina, 2015). Our desire was to develop a model to be used in EFL teacher education programs to develop EFL teachers' cultural identity. We think that if the English language teacher educators try to address the cultural identity of the EFL teachers in pre-service and in-service teacher education programs, they can develop the cultural identity of the EFL teachers to become an EFL teacher in the multicultural context of Iran.

### **Methodology**

In this study we used narrative inquiry (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015) to learn the role of negotiating cultural issues with respect to the cultural identity development of the novice and experienced Iranian EFL teachers. Narratives can be thought of as the primary vehicle for forwarding and expressing identity and those who are acting as narrative analysts do their best to know individuals and their process of identity development (De Fina, 2015). It is worth mentioning that it was in the 1990s when the importance of narratives emerged leading to referring to the decade as "narrative turns." Accordingly, there is not much disagreement about the capacity of narratives as the tools for negotiating both individual and collective identities. Here, it has to be noted that some researchers (e.g., De Fina, Schiffirin, & Bamberg, 2006) believed that to use narratives and narrative analysis to examine and investigate identity, one should come to the understanding that "identities are not sets of characteristics that can be ascribed to individuals or manifestations of individual essences, but emerge through semiotic processes in which people construct images of themselves and others" (De Fina, 2015, p. 351). Narrative enquiry is considered as an invaluable vehicle to examine teachers' identity

development (De Fina, 2015) since it can show the researchers a clear picture of the teaching activities and performances of the teachers.

### **Ethical Permissions**

The researchers did not need to seek permissions from anyone or any agencies to conduct the study. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the process was not part a formal university program, but it was part of an in-service program designed by the researchers of the current study to increase the cultural knowledge of the EFL teachers and develop their methods of addressing cultural discussions in their classrooms. However, to secure the participants' safety, privacy, and confidentiality, we let them know about the purpose of the study and they were free to leave the study anytime they wanted.

### **The Context**

This research was conducted in Iran, where EFL teachers participated in the programs provided by state universities to obtain a degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). During TEFL programs, the EFL teachers develop their knowledge in English teaching. The researchers of the current study tried to track the identity development of the EFL teachers through a series of studies (Meihami, 2019a, 2019b; Meihami, Esfandiari, & Hosseini, 2019; Meihami & Salīte, 2019; Rashidi & Meihami, 2017, 2019) to be able to develop an identity-oriented teacher education program in the future. Given that, the researchers of the current study developed a program of cultural negotiation for the EFL teachers in which the cultural issues had been negotiated among the researchers and the EFL teachers. During this program, the EFL teachers participated in the negotiation sessions about cultural issues happening in the EFL classroom and the way to address them in the EFL classes. The materials of the programs included academic papers, instructional movies, and books about how to address culture in second language classes which we gave the teachers to study. Then, in the negotiation sessions we discussed and negotiated the cultural concepts of the materials. The operational definition for negotiation in this study was that we discussed and debated the materials with the teachers, and we continued it to the time when we reached agreement with the teachers. It should be stated that we did not impose our opinions on the teachers for reaching agreement, but we discussed their opinions and ideas and the final agreement was mutually constructed. Then, after each session of negotiation which happened among teachers and the lead researcher (Hussein, as the negotiator) about the materials related to different ways of addressing cultural issues in the classroom, we asked the teachers to write their narratives after participating in each negotiation session. In each negotiation session the negotiator discussed different cultural issues which might occur in the classrooms, then, some supplementary materials such as instructional clips, or academic research on how to address cultural variations in the EFL classes were presented. In the next step, a negotiation was started among the EFL teachers and the negotiator. They discussed the issues until they reached agreement on the points. Finally, the EFL teachers were asked to address cultural issues based on the reached agreements in their classes. For 10 months, each of the EFL teachers wrote at least 7 narratives (some wrote more than 7 narratives) and delivered them to us. The reason behind asking them to write narratives after participating in negotiation sessions and their classes was to track their cultural performances and practices in their classes which showed us their cultural identity development. From among the EFL teachers who participated in this program, nine of them agreed to participate in this study. In the following section, we provide information about the participants of the study.



## Participants

We used convenient sampling to select the participants of the study. We made an announcement to the EFL teachers involved in teaching English as a foreign language in different institutes to participate in a cultural negotiation program held for research purposes. Then, we explained the purpose of the study to them. From among those who accepted to participate in the study, we selected those EFL teachers who were categorized under novice and experienced dichotomies (Gatbonton, 2008; Johnson, 2005; Tsui, 2005). It is highly important to note that the novice and experienced EFL teachers were selected based on the criteria of years-of-teaching experience (Gatbonton, 2008; Richards, Li, & Tang, 1998): English language teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience were categorized as novice EFL teachers and those with 5 or more years of teaching experience were called experienced teachers (Gatbonton, 2008). Accordingly, 9 EFL teachers were selected with 4 novices and 5 experienced EFL teachers. All of the teachers taught EFL in different language institutes. Table 1 indicates the background characteristics of both novice and experienced EFL teachers participating in the current study. It should be stated that for obeying ethical rules of qualitative studies, the researchers used pseudonyms instead of the real names of the participants.

**Table 1.** Background Characteristics of the EFL Teachers

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Years of teaching</b>	<b>Gender</b>
<b>Mohammad</b>	10	Male
<b>Hafez</b>	8	Male
<b>Terme</b>	8	Female
<b>Baran</b>	7	Female
<b>Arman</b>	6	Male
<b>Behzad</b>	4	Male
<b>Sara</b>	3	Female
<b>Reza</b>	2	Male
<b>Mansour</b>	2	Male

## Data: Teacher-Authored Narratives

We gathered two types of narratives from the EFL teachers who participated in this study. First, we asked them to write biographical narratives at the start of the study. Then, after participating in each negotiation session, we asked them to write interactionally-oriented narratives (De Fina, 2015). We needed both types of narratives to find a comprehensive view of the EFL teachers' cultural identity at the start of the study (biographical narratives) and after each session of negotiation (interactionally oriented narratives). After starting the negotiation program in which the 9 EFL teachers participated, we asked the teachers to write their narratives, with a length between 400 and 1000 words from the prompt of how they addressed the cultural issues that took place in their classrooms. These could be all the cultural discussions originating from the textbooks, learners' cultural variations, or even the teachers' cultural variations. For instance, individuals with different cultural backgrounds in Iran have different ways to welcome their guests. While some do their best to prepare everything for their guests, others are more lenient in this regard. Such topics originating from the EFL textbooks and relating to the culture of the EFL learners and teachers were the start of cultural discussions.

## Narrative Analysis Frameworks

The narratives authored by the EFL teachers were analyzed by using two frameworks, namely, Wenger's (1998) community of practice and Pennington's (2014) model TESOL teacher identity. The two frameworks were appropriate for the purpose of analysis in our study since by using them, we could track their cultural identity development. It is, however, very important to note that the main framework was Wenger's (1998) community of practice. Pennington's (2014) model TESOL teacher identity was the supplementary one. This means that we analyzed the narratives for the modes of belongings of Wenger's community of practice model, and then the narratives were investigated for the dimensions of Pennington's (2014) model. The reason for doing so was that by combining the two frameworks, the rigor of the study would increase (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2014) and it would help us to develop the model. Given that, we used the two frameworks to analyze the EFL teachers' narratives by matching data to each of Wenger's (1998) modes of belongings and Pennington's (2014) identity dimensions and calling them the a priori codes. We describe them below.

**Wenger's (1998) community of practice.** Based on this theory, learning is a social phenomenon. Wenger (1998) believes that by engaging in the practices done in different communities, one can learn and change. The theory has three modes of belongings which are discussed below.

- **Engagement:** It is referring to the participation of the individuals in the mutually negotiated activities with higher degree of complexity comparing to groups or networks.
- **Imagination:** According to Wenger (1998) imagination is "a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves" (p. 176). It is referring to one's perspective of him/herself.
- **Alignment:** This mode of belonging refers to how the identity of others can influence one's identity either in a positive or negative way.

**Pennington's (2014) model of TESOL teacher identity.** This model is both an approach to identity development and a *Practice-Centered/Contextual Frames* which is a theoretical framework for data analysis. The model has been described according to Pennington (2014):

- **Instructional identity:** teaching content, methods, materials, and technologies; teacher roles, teacher–student relationship,
- **Disciplinary identity:** academic affiliation, academic qualifications, areas of teacher knowledge, research, and scholarship,
- **Professional identity:** ethics and standards, teacher education and development, working conditions, political influence and power, collegial relations,
- **Vocational identity:** client care; helper role; meeting student needs; voluntary labor; support of department, institution, and field,
- **Economic identity:** income, accountability and efficiency, cost-effectiveness, customer satisfaction, recruitment, and promotion,
- **Global identity:** international orientation; practices related to global flows of people, money, technology, information, ideologies, languages,

- **Local identity:** situatedness of practice in department, institution, community, nation; specific teacher and student groups in a particular locale, and
- **Sociocultural identity:** linguistic and ethnic backgrounds of teachers and students; demographics of administrators, teachers, students, that is, “Teacher’s applications of knowledge of sociocultural dimensions of the field and sociocultural factors that impact teaching and learning in the teacher’s own practice” (Pennington, 2014, p. 27).

### Data Analysis Procedure

We analyzed the narratives produced by the novice teachers separately from those produced by the experienced teachers to have a comprehensive view over the probable differences and similarities.

**Phase One.** In the first phase, the narratives were transferred into MAXQDA 10 for further examination. We used the framework dimensions (from both Wenger’s and Pennington’s frameworks) as a priori codes for analyzing the participants’ narratives. To do so, we dragged and dropped each part of the narrative into one of the frameworks’ components. The following example is a part of narrative produced by a novice EFL teacher and our thinking about how to code it:

#### Example #1

. . . and I *have read in my books* during my *BA, MA, and a course in PhD* that culture has got a very *influential role* in *class management* . . . I think that it is, however, *not an easy job* to be an English teacher who can keep up with *the many-faces* of *English language culture* . . . *add* to it the different types of *culture language learners* have . . . Now, *after the negotiation sessions* we had, I think my classes should be *as a river in which all culture can flow in the streams*.

The bolded and italicized words, phrases, and sentences are not semantically and culturally neutral. To analyze the narratives, we used the definition provided for each component of the two theoretical frameworks, then we addressed the narratives based on such definitions and highlighted the parts which were related to each component. To that end, the narratives were analyzed by the researchers based on the criteria and definitions of each component of the two theoretical frameworks. For instance, some of the phrases in Example 1 show that the teacher referred to engagement from Wenger’s model, professional identity, and instructional identity from Pennington’s model since he was writing about the knowledge he obtained during his studies.

*have read in my books (instructional identity):* the teacher states explicitly that he has a lot of readings regarding cultural issues. Implicitly, he considers himself as an experienced English teacher who has rich theoretical knowledge in this regard.

*BA, MA, and a course in PhD (instructional identity):* the teacher, once again explicitly, wants to state that he is knowledgeable in the field of second/foreign language teaching since he is going to obtain his PhD of the field soon.

*influential role in class management (engagement and instructional identity):* the teacher thinks of cultural competence and intercultural competence as a vehicle to manage the class. It can be explicitly understood, from this section of

the narrative and the other sections which the teacher produced, that cultural understanding is a type of strategy for classroom management.

**not an easy job (professional identity):** it is a confirmation for the first highlighted parts, “have read in my books and BA, MA, and a course in PhD,” in that managing cultural and intercultural issues in the classroom is not easy to do.

**after the negotiation sessions:** the emergence of negotiation sessions influential role.

**as a river in which all culture can flow in the streams (instructional identity, professional identity, engagement):** the teacher, metaphorically, believes that all the cultural issues of all the stakeholders in an English language classroom should be taken into account. This part of the extract shows the interrelations among instructional identity, professional identity, and engagement.

**Phase Two.** In the second phase of the study, the researchers tried to find the relationships between the excerpts and the theoretical frameworks of the study in order to establish the ground for developing the EFL cultural identity model. We tried to create the model based on the information which we obtained from the first phase of the study such as the relationships between the a priori codes of the two frameworks in the narratives of the EFL teachers. Moreover, by reviewing the comprehensive literature about cultural identity in general, and EFL teachers’ cultural identity development in particular, we tried to develop the final model. It is highly important to note that the final model was a qualitative one in which the researchers went through an emergent design, meaning that the researcher went back and forth in the information obtained through the first phase of the study and the comprehensive literature to develop the model. To do this phase, the researchers used Code Matrix Browsers and Code Relation Browsers of MAXQDA to indicate where the a priori codes had interrelations in the narratives of the EFL teachers. MAXQDA 10 helped the researchers to visualize the codes for further examination. Figure (1) indicates the results of Code Matrix Browser which shows how the narratives of an EFL teacher was assigned to the a priori codes of the two frameworks.

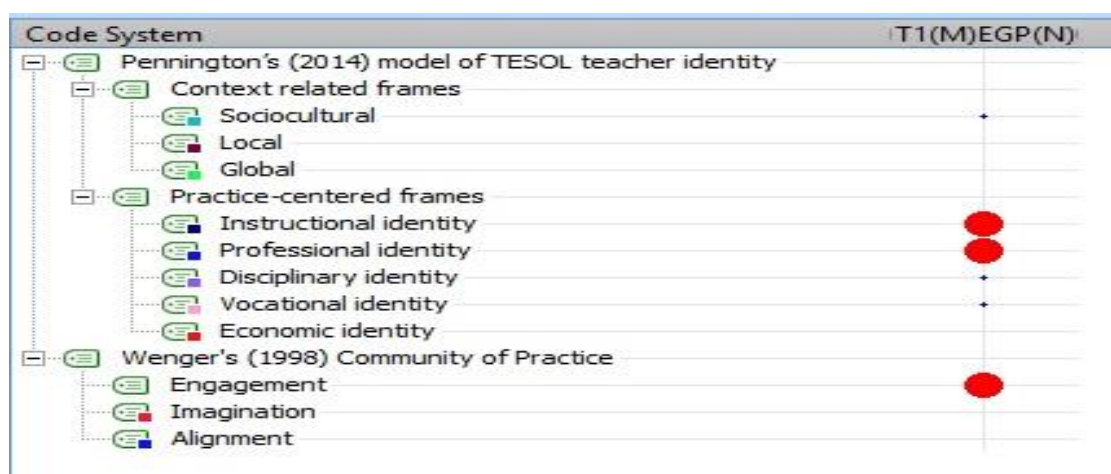


Figure 1. Codes referred to by one teacher in his narratives

It should be stated that the bigger the circles are, the more the teachers addressed those components. Moreover, MAXQDA 10 has a facility called the *Code Relations Browsers* which allowed the researchers to delve into the codes for the relations which may exist among them. The relationships were based on how a part of a narrative is related to more than one a priori

codes of the frameworks. For instance, when the EFL teachers mentioned something about in-service instructions and its relationship to their professional development, we assigned this section into professional identity and instructional identity. Figure 2 presents the Code Relations Browsers for Teacher #1.



Figure 2. Code Relations Browsers for one of the teachers

Figure (2) is very informative in the sense that it allows the researchers to see the relationships among the components of the two frameworks. Through Figure (2), one can understand that the relationships can be seen between professional identity and instructional identity; engagement and instructional identity; moreover, a smaller relationship can be seen between professional identity and engagement. This type of information, when collected, helped the researchers to propose the new model of cultural identity development: the negotiated one. After collecting information about the existing interrelationships among the a priori codes of the two frameworks delivered by MAXQDA and reviewing the comprehensive literature about EFL teachers' cultural identity development, the researchers started to develop an EFL teacher cultural identity model which could include the relations among the a priori codes, negotiations, and the related literature, qualitatively.

### Rigor of the Study

Given the importance of rigor in the qualitative studies (Ary et al., 2014), we used member checking to assure the credibility of the data analysis. So, whenever, the narratives or parts of them were vague for us to codify, we asked the teachers to make it clear for us. Moreover, to assure the dependability of the study, we asked another coder who had experience in qualitative data analysis to check the narratives and codify them. The results of the agreement between the codification done by the other coder and us showed a high degree of inter-rater agreement, showing high degree of dependability.

## Findings

In this section, we show the findings of the study. Two points need to be clarified about the findings. First, although it was not the purpose of this study to examine the role of negotiation in cultural identity development of the novice and experienced EFL teachers, we dichotomized them since it can be informative for readers and future researchers. Second, as our main framework was Wenger's (1998) community of practice, we organized the title under this framework. Then, each time we observed interrelationships between the a priori codes of Wenger's model and those of Pennington's (2014) model, we mentioned and discussed them under Wenger's a priori codes.

### Narrative Analysis of the Experienced EFL Teachers

**Engagement in the Narratives of Experienced EFL Teachers.** The experienced EFL teachers' narratives were analyzed by using both frameworks. The important point about the engagement of the experienced EFL teachers was the fact that the negotiations which they had on cultural issues, (i.e., the papers, books, and instructional videos regarding ways of addressing culture in the second language classes) can be regarded as an empowerment for their previous and future experiences, meaning that the knowledge they obtained through participating in the negotiations helped them to rectify their previous assumptions and to have a more successful future regarding addressing cultural issues in their classrooms. The excerpts 1 to 3 indicate parts of the narratives authored by the experienced EFL teachers including Mohammad, Hafez, and Terme.

Excerpt # 1 (Mohammad)

. . . the negotiation on cultural issues of the English classes helped me to **use my previous cultural understandings to conjoin them to future experiences** and finally use them in my classrooms . . . **it was not difficult** since we **had previous studies** about how to teach and approach cultural and cross-cultural issues.

Excerpt # 2 (Hafez)

. . . and if want to define the negotiation, I should say that it is **the arena in which our previous knowledge** about addressing cultural issues have been put **beside new knowledge** . . . I learnt through participating in these negotiations that **involving and negotiating with others can be helpful** to help me how to **come up with my classroom** issues regarding **cultural ones**.

Excerpt # 3 (Terme)

The thing was **whenever the lead researcher started to negotiate** on the materials related to the cultural issues, **I discussed and debated with him** since I had studied **some books about cultural issue management** in the classroom.

The above-mentioned excerpts (1 to 3) help the researchers to use the metaphor of gatekeeper of knowledge for the experienced EFL teachers. As Gatbonton (2008) stated the experienced teachers are more stable in the act of teaching when compared with the novice ones. This causes the experienced EFL teachers to act as a mediator to connect the previous knowledge to the newly received knowledge. Consequently, the experienced EFL teachers who have already approached the concept of negotiation about cultural issues differently, looked at engagement in different ways too. The researchers of the current study believe, based on the narratives

authored by the experienced EFL teachers, that the quality of engagement of these teachers in negotiation about cultural issues and the final change in their cultural identity depend on the ability and quality of the negotiator and the negotiating materials. This assumption can be extracted, semantically, from parts of the narratives such as “I discussed and debated with him since I had studied some books about cultural issue management in the classroom.” As a whole, engagement is an unstable issue for the experienced EFL teachers since its occurrence is highly dependent on the quality of negotiation. Moreover, through examining the narratives, the researchers came to understand that the instructional and professional identity of the experienced EFL teachers altered. The reason for such change is their implications about the future teaching based on what they had achieved in the negotiations.

The importance of the quality of negotiation can be discussed in another way. According to Imahori and Cupach (2005), the individuals should feel the necessity of negotiation of their cultural identity and construction and reconstruction of their cultural identity. It depends, to a great extent, on the negotiation materials and the way the negotiator pushes the negotiation process. Baran and Arman, two of the experienced EFL teachers, stated in their narratives the following issues in this regard.

Excerpt # 4 (Baran)

. . . although the process of **negotiation was done well** for me, I think that sometimes **I did not need to know about some issues** due to **my pervious awareness** about it . . . totally, however, I think that the **materials** [including papers and chapters about dealing with cultural issue in the classroom] were **selected appropriately**, but **we need more than that**.

Excerpt # 5 (Arman)

The discussions we run about the study materials about cultural issues **need more face-to-face than social networks interactions** . . . the lead researcher, however, helped us to involve [engage] more on cultural issues **we had very limited information about them**.

The concept of satisfaction in all regards of cultural identity should be achieved in order to result in engagement (Ting-Toomey, 2005). As can be seen in the current excerpts (4 and 5) the experienced EFL teachers needed to participate in advanced cultural negotiation due to the fact that they have already had knowledge about different cultural practices in the EFL classes. To summarize, the experienced EFL teachers who wrote their narratives believed that engagement in the cultural issue negotiation is beneficial provided that the quality of negotiation including materials, and media of negotiating are fully addressed and achieved. Moreover, it should be highly important when the cultural identity of the experienced EFL teachers is addressed; their previous studies and knowledge should be taken into account.

**Imagination in the Narratives of Experienced EFL Teachers.** As it was stated earlier when imagination is at center with regard to the teacher identity the self-image and the view of teachers of their professions, practices, and the future planning are crucial to be considered (Goodnough, 2010). The main characteristic of this phase is teachers’ reflection upon their teaching. Furthermore, it should be stated that imagination and engagement are interrelated. Terme, Mohammad, and Hafez referred to this code in their excerpts.

Excerpt # 6 (Terme)

**I think and rethink on the methods** I have been using for the **management of cultural issues** and addressing culture in the classes **after negotiating about**

**cultural issues** . . . all in all, I think that **the negotiation** sessions should be **in accordance** to **what we**, language teachers, have **faced in the classrooms**.

Excerpt # 7 (Mohammad)

I should say that I **made use of some of the points** I obtained in **negotiation about cultural** issues in the classrooms and tried to **conduct some research actions** regarding their **appropriateness** . . . for the future, moreover, I have the idea of using more **specialized techniques** for approaching culture.

Excerpt # 8 (Hafez)

. . . the **negotiation sessions on cultural issues made me rethink** about how I have addressed the cultural issues in my teaching years . . . one thing is that **even though I rethought about my classroom management** for cultural issues, I **do not think the negotiations added more** to my **previous practices** . . . but **very few notes** to be considered in my future practices.

The excerpts (6 to 8) indicate that the experienced EFL teachers reflected upon their way of addressing cultural issues and the techniques which they used in this regard. However, the most important issue, as was for engagement of the experienced EFL teachers, is the quality of the negotiation. As Hafez in excerpt 8 stated, there were very few notes which he obtained in the negotiation sessions compared to what he had already known. The thing is that due to the expertise which the experienced EFL teachers have, the negotiator should run an advance level of negotiation in all respects.

Through examining the narratives of the experienced EFL teachers, it was revealed that these teachers had more options to implement the points addressed in the negotiation about cultural issues in their classes. Terme and Mohammad raised their assumptions about this issue in the following excerpts.

Excerpt # 9 (Terme)

. . . some of the points raised in the negotiation helped me to manage my classroom cultural issues based on **the approaches and methods I had from my previous learning** . . . and I **think of new ways to use such points** . . . **more and more techniques can be used** to address cultural practices in the classrooms.

Excerpt # 10 (Mohammad)

In the negotiation session I stated that I have **different ways of approaching the cultural issues** we have negotiated in my classes . . . **some of them I learnt from my BA and MA** courses and **some** which are more useful **from my real classes**.

As Akyel (1997) stated, the experienced teachers have more options to approach teaching in their classes. The more options originate from different practices and activities run by the teachers. The experienced EFL teachers in the current study indicated through their narratives that they would like to amalgamate their previous cultural practices with new ones (e.g., more and more techniques can be used) to address the points which they negotiated about cultural issues in their classrooms. This, in its own place, indicates that the self-image of the experienced EFL teachers changed and they imagined themselves as the teachers who were responsible to join the previous and the new approaches to come to cultural issues in their classrooms.



**Alignment in the Narratives of Experienced EFL Teachers.** As defined by Wenger (1998, p. 179) alignment is “a mode of belonging that is not confined to mutual engagement . . . participants become connected through coordination of their energies, actions, and practices.” As it was stated earlier, it is through alignment that a teacher connects his/her practices with a broader community. The point is that alignment can be either negative, when disempowering the teachers, or positive, when asking them for their critical thinking. The major code obtained in the current study with regard to the experienced EFL teachers was the positive alignment. The following excerpts are the parts of narratives authored by Arman, Baran, and Terme.

Excerpt # 11 (Arman)

Finally, I should say that even though **I learnt a lot from the negotiation** about cultural issues and the approaches to deal with them **I never** implemented them **without second thought and search.**

Excerpt # 12 (Baran)

Teachers **need to know about what the community of practice** does with regard to addressing cultural issues in the language classes . . . it is my **advice** that **teachers should first know their real contexts** and then **run them through the community.**

Excerpt # 13 (Terme)

. . . although as English teachers, **my colleagues and I, need to know** what is the **current stance** of the **language related practices** with regard to the **cultural issues** in the classrooms, we should **determine our stance**, too . . . the **reality of classes** sometimes is totally different of the **depiction of them in the papers.**

The above excerpts (11 to 13) indicate that the experienced EFL teachers could make use of negotiation about cultural issues in its best way. The reason for such a claim is that not only have they found benefit from the negotiation sessions, but, also, they made use of their critical thinking to do it in positive ways. The researchers believe that one can say that the experienced EFL teachers construct and reconstruct their cultural identity after participating in the negotiation with higher awareness.

Moreover, in the narratives of the experienced EFL teachers, one can observe their high attention to the reality of the language classroom. More often than not, there are some constraints such as time for the language teachers which limit them to do their best regarding what they have learnt theoretically, and in the current study, the negotiation about cultural issues. As stated before, the policy makers need to devote more facilities to the teachers to make them able to practice the theories (Nassaji, 2012; Zand-Moghadam & Meihami, 2016).

### **Narrative Analysis of the Novice EFL Teachers**

**Engagement in the Narratives of Novice EFL Teachers.** The narratives authored by the novice EFL teachers on negotiation about cultural issues were analyzed for their cultural identity construction and reconstruction. The engagement of the novice EFL teachers in cultural practices and their reconstruction of their cultural identity about cultural differences in their classes were apparent from their narratives. In the following section, parts of the narratives authored by Sara, Reza, and Mansour have been shown.

Excerpt # 14 (Sara)

. . . after a while and **when I read some papers on the opportunities of cultural varieties** in teaching I came to the conclusion that some of the **cultural differences** I observed in my classes that my students have, can help me in **expanding the cultural subjects** in the class . . . **using them for discussion and language learning.**

Excerpt # 15 (Reza)

. . . **studying about cultural varieties** was important for me in two ways. First, I **changed my strict view** with regard to the **best culture** for the classroom. Previously, I had the idea that not all cultures could be taught in the classrooms. Now that I study more on the role of culture and cultural differences in the classrooms I changed this view. Moreover, it can help us to **teach different skills in the classroom.**

Excerpt # 16 (Mansour)

. . . the **negotiation** we had on some cultural issues **led us not to think of cultural differences as threats, but opportunities** in that they can be used as to **teaching new notions** through the medium of language.

As can be seen from the excerpts (15 to 16) the novice EFL teachers' cultural identity changed about the cultural issues in their classes. It might be due to the fact that these teachers had fewer real experiences of the cultural management of the classroom and consequently, they were more open to the outcomes of negotiations. This led to their engagement in the new cultural practices considering the cultural issues from different parts such as their students. By this token, the results can be shown with what Gatbonton (2008) found: the novice teachers need more time to grasp new knowledge. This may lead them to follow the policy of collecting whatever they obtain from engagement of their community of practice in their classrooms until they become a self-policy maker.

Moreover, as Tsui (2005) stated, the novice teachers are in the process of evolving, in which they are fluctuating more to nest their knowledge in all regards. This means that their knowledge is characterized with more variable elements which lead them to be more open to new teaching related issues (Gatbonton, 2008).

Excerpt # 17 (Sara)

I do agree with the point that the **classroom is like an arena for cultural transmission.** Here is the place where **teachers and students** can be along each other **to reach cultural agreement.**

As the excerpt 17 shows, the novice teacher considered the EFL classroom as a context in which the dialogic cultural meaning can be transmitted. The researchers believed in the different contexts for the teachers and their students which originated from their different cultural background among other things. The more the teachers are able to be involved in the contexts of their students, the more they can be successful in the teaching profession. It is true with regard to the cultural identity of the teachers and their students. Through the dialogic interactions and practices of cultural issues, the teachers can be more in line with their students' cultural identity or even construct and reconstruct it.

**Imagination in the Narratives of Novice EFL Teachers.** The narratives authored by the novice EFL teachers were analyzed for their imagination after they had negotiation on

cultural issues in their classrooms. As stated elsewhere in this study, imagination is about the change in the self-image of teachers regarding their teaching reflection and their risk-taking characteristics. The results of the narratives indicated that the novice EFL teachers were likely to affiliate themselves as teacher-researchers, and teachers as the producers of their own methods of teaching, but with care. The following excerpts (18 to 21) are parts of the narratives by the novice teachers including Sara, Reza, Mansour, and Behzad.

Excerpt # 18 (Sara)

. . . **I am new to teaching . . . the ways and techniques that we came across in the negotiations** on cultural issues, and **the emphasis by the negotiator on different role a language teacher** can have, made me think that I can have **my own way of addressing cultural issues** in my classes . . . however, there is some **sort of stress** which makes **me take care**.

Excerpt # 19 (Reza)

I remember **once** that I **read a paper on teaching cultural contents**. A part of that paper was **very interesting** for me and **I saw the reference** of that section in the reference list **to read more**. I state this because **at first I did not believe in benefit** of the **negotiation** materials . . . **the more I read, the more I understood** my **different roles** as a **teacher**.

Excerpt # 20(Mansour)

. . . in one of the **papers** I studied about the **cultural contents** of the ELT books in different countries . . . **I was interested** in that kind of the **research**. Later on **when I discussed** more with the **negotiator**, he let me know more about such research . . . **in near future** I want to **investigate** using cultural differences in discussions on the speaking ability of my students.

Excerpt # 21 (Behzad)

. . . the **negotiation** about cultural issues **led me to think of some methods** to use these differences in my classes for the discussion matters . . . I think, however, that I should watch **some tutorials** in this regard in order **not to face conflicts** in the classrooms.

All of the above-mentioned excerpts (18 to 21) indicate that the self-image of the novice EFL teachers changed with regard to their culturally related roles in their classrooms. The important thing is that the imagination facet of the novice EFL teachers changed.

On the whole, it can be theorized that through doing negotiation on cultural identity of the novice EFL teachers, they find new cultural roles for themselves, and in a word, their professional identity will be constructed on those new roles. Reflecting on their teaching and doing action research, the novice teachers dare to start new practices which create new identity for them. When involved in cultural management of their classes, the process will address their cultural identity.

**Alignment in the Narratives of Novice EFL Teachers.** Finally, the analysis of the narratives authored by the novice EFL teachers was done to examine their cultural identity development in this respect. The results indicated that the novice EFL teachers align themselves to the global community of practice regarding cultural practices. It means that these teachers aligned themselves to the community which they were familiar with while participating in the negotiation sessions. The community is all those papers and materials which

led the novice EFL teachers to change their mindset, and ultimately, their cultural identity in their classrooms. Excerpts 22 and 23, authored by Sara and Mansour can be seen in this respect.

Excerpt # 22 (Sara)

I think that the overall of **the negotiation** about cultural practice and cultural issues in the classes can **convince me to follow the rules** . . . the thing is I believe if all the teachers of our institute follow these rules, **many of the cultural related problems** will be removed.

Excerpt # 23 (Mansour)

. . . after all, I tried to **speak about what I have already understood** in the negotiation about cultural issues **with my colleagues**. I think the subject we discussed in the **negotiations** can be **set as the comprehensive principles** for all the classes.

One interesting point regarding the excerpts 22 and 23 and the ones that follow is that the novice EFL teachers were the followers of negative alignment in that they accepted the materials which had been negotiated about cultural issues without critical thinking and their own assumptions. The researchers did not observe the implementation of any sort of critical thinking on the negotiated materials. Excerpt 24 and 25 indicate this in the narratives of Reza and Behzad.

Excerpt # 24 (Reza)

We **should go through** these **instructional materials, step by step**, and implement them in our classes . . . in this way we need to have a **good consultor** to follow his/her instructions about managing cultural issues in the classrooms.

Excerpt # 25 (Mansour)

. . . our negotiator was **knowledgeable enough** and **I follow his way** in my classes . . . the results of such **following procedures were better management** of my classes.

The point is that the novice EFL teachers, as stated by Gatbonton (2008), were still in their training stage and this led them to align themselves to those who they thought were more knowledgeable. This is a two-edged sword since if the novice teachers exert full freedom about what they want to do in their classes, they may fall into problems such as an inability to create appropriate materials or inability to teach based on appropriate methods since some of them do not have the necessary professional requirements. On the other hand, if they do not find the necessary freedom in their classes to prepare the teaching and learning methods of their classes, their critical thinking will decrease in all respects, so they need to follow others to teach.

### **Model of Developing Cultural Identity of EFL Teachers: A Negotiated One**

Based on the qualitative information obtained through the analysis of narratives authored by the novice and experienced EFL teachers, a model of EFL teachers' cultural identity which is framed from negotiation has been reached. It should be pointed out that the model was created by using MAXQDA 10, at first. Then, the researchers reevaluated it based on the overall data analysis of the study. Figure 3 illustrates the model.

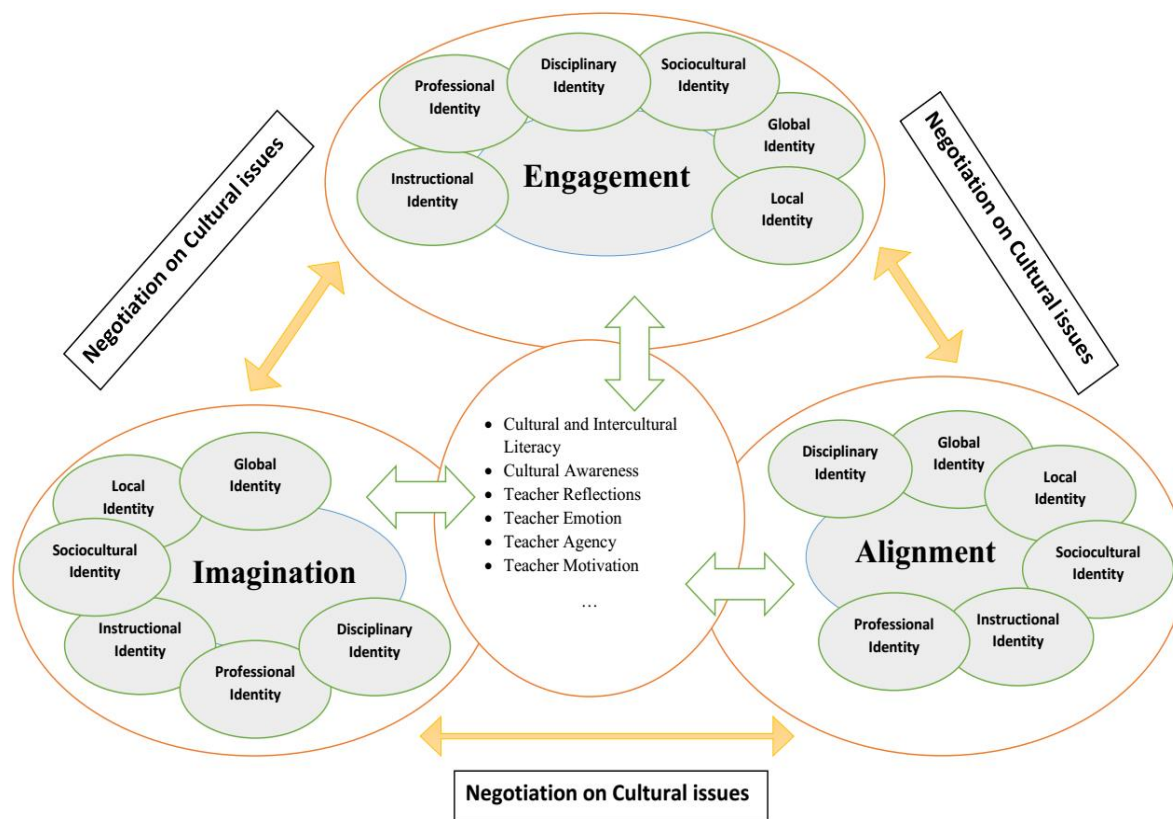


Figure 3. Model of developing cultural identity of EFL teachers

Figure 3 illustrates a comprehensive model of English language teachers' cultural identity development, both EFL ones, which was established based on the principles of Wenger's (1998) theory of community of practice and Pennington's (2014) model of TESOL teacher identity. The narrative enquiry contributed to the researchers finding the relationships among different components of the theories to obtain the factors which can enhance the quality of the negotiation about cultural issues for the final purpose which is English language teachers' cultural identity development. The model of negotiation about cultural issues can be used in pre-service and in-service English language teacher education to develop the cultural identity of these teachers.

As can be seen in Figure 3, there are relationships among engagement, imagination, and alignment and teachers' instructional, professional, disciplinary, global, local, and sociocultural identities. It can be understood that the economic and vocational identities of language teachers were not included in the model since the results of the current qualitative study did not indicate such associations. Moreover, one can see that the linking chain in the model is the methods through them one can enhance the quality of negotiation about cultural issues, and finally, develop teachers' cultural identity. The chain includes methods such as addressing cultural and intercultural literacy, awareness, teacher reflection, teacher motivation, teacher agency, and teacher emotion. Some of these methods are roles that English language teachers can have in their profession have been discussed previously in different parts of the discussion section.

The model demonstrates that by engaging English language teachers in negotiating about cultural issues, their instructional, professional, disciplinary identities will be constructed and reconstructed since the nature of engagement makes a community of critical thinking, (inter)cultural awareness and literacy, and reflection upon their practices. Furthermore,

engagement has local, global, and sociocultural orientations which lead the teachers to participate in such contexts, constructing and reconstructing new cultural identity in this respect.

Addressing imagination of English language teaching can help them with other types of identity including the ones which can be seen in Figure 3. Through addressing the imagination, language educators can enhance the creativity of teachers as they engage and work with different cultures. On top of this, working on teachers' imagination in a community of practice, especially in this study on negotiation about cultural issues, will affect their "self" within other types of their identities including instructional, professional, and disciplinary. Finally, imagination on different contextual factors, including global and sociocultural, will lead to teacher reflection on the negotiation content and their cultural identity development. It should be stated that all the factors such as critical thinking, cultural literacy and awareness, teacher reflection, motivation, and agency have constructive effects on developing teacher imagination.

Finally, alignment can be in direct relation to other types of teacher identity. By negotiating cultural issues, English language teachers try to use their critical cultural awareness to create new methods of teaching and addressing cultural issues in their classrooms which ultimately lead to new cultural practices in their classes and development of their cultural identity. Moreover, the contextual factors related to the identity of the teachers enhanced in the negotiation sessions lead the teachers to prepare themselves to teach in different contexts. That said, a teacher who raises his/her cultural identity to participate in a socioculturally based class in the negotiation sessions, will be able to come up with cultural issues in the classrooms.

To put it in nutshell, it should be stated that Figure 1 illustrates how negotiation about cultural issues, based on the principles of community of practice, and practice and contextual identity of English language teachers, can lead to development of their cultural identity. In this respect, the quality of the negotiation and its relationship to teacher cultural identity factors plays a very constructive role. Given that, the model emphasizes that the language teacher educators need to negotiate how to handle and go through cultural issues with the language teachers by having in mind their differences across the related factors. In so doing and by merging the three main principles of community of practice together, the development of cultural identity can be the result.

## **Discussion**

The findings of the present study indicated important issues about the cultural identity development of the novice and experienced EFL teachers. The findings revealed that the quality of negotiation about cultural issues are crucial for developing experienced EFL teachers' cultural identity. This can be explained through a co-cultural theory of cultural identity (Orbe, 1998). The proponents of this theory state that there is a power hierarchy which specifies the quality of negotiation. By the same token, the experienced EFL teachers who have a higher degree of expertise in teaching need a negotiation type in which they will be convinced about their teaching approaches in all regards including addressing cultural issues in their classes. Moreover, as it is mentioned through this study, there is a bidirectional connection between cultural identity and teaching practice. That said, it is usual that teachers are in a never-ending process of learning in which they learn new teaching practices and by practicing them they reconstruct their cultural identity. As such, the quality of negotiation about cultural practices which the experienced EFL teachers need to know for their classes needs to be balanced in all regards with their experience. In the same way, this should be the case for the novice EFL teachers, too.

The results of the present study, moreover, revealed that the novice EFL teachers used the materials and information they had obtained in the negotiation sessions with much care. This can be stated by referring to the information obtained from their narratives, their students' narratives, and the results of observing. This might be because novice EFL teachers are in an evolving process of creating knowledge, a knowledge which is not stable (Gatbonton, 2008; Tsui, 2005). The point is that since the cultural knowledge of the novice EFL teachers does not reach a level in which they can use it professionally, they prefer to do it step by step and with care. This should be considered a crucial point when the language teacher educators aim to hold special programs to address the cultural identity of the teachers through negotiations. In such programs, the quality of negotiation should accompany working on cultural knowledge of the novice EFL teachers. Consequently, as Pennington's (2014) model of TESOL teacher identity concerns, the instructional identity of the novice EFL teachers should be addressed using different approaches and methods of addressing cultural issues in their classes.

One insightful piece of information obtained from the analysis of the novice and experienced EFL teachers' narratives was that they added new roles to their professional teaching role after participating in the negotiation sessions such as acting as teacher-researchers. However, it is also important to know that the novice EFL teachers approached such new identities with much care compared to the experienced EFL teachers. Burns (1999) states that new conceptualization in teaching can be followed by teacher reflection of their practices. In a similar vein, when the novice and experienced EFL teachers who participated in this study reflected on the points which they reached through participating in the negotiation sessions, there were resulting changes in their identity in general, and their cultural identity in particular. Teachers in general, and EFL teachers in particular, should come to understand and believe that they do not need to change their role from a teacher to a researcher, but they add a part to their role when becoming a teacher-researcher and do research to help them in their teaching.

One important issue which bears importance in developing cultural identity of the EFL teachers is the way through which the cultural issues are conceptualized. It should be noted that English for general purposes and the related materials have a vast conception of cultural issues which, most of the time, include the EFL conception of culture. One reason for the ability of the EFL teachers, both the novice and experienced ones, to start using the results of the negotiations in their classes was that they were familiar with culture through their everyday teaching. Given that, in the negotiation about treating cultural issues in the classrooms, EFL teachers should be informed about new instructional approaches and methods to have an appropriate reaction toward the cultural issues in their classrooms. In other words, the instructional identity of the novice and experienced EFL teacher should be hand in hand with their cultural identity.

### **EFL Teachers' Cultural Identity: A Critical Discussion of the Main Findings**

The results of the current study, overall, indicated the constructive role of negotiation about cultural issues on the cultural identity development of the novice and experienced EFL teachers. This might be due to development of cultural awareness of the novice and experienced EFL teachers which lead them to develop their cultural identity. Negotiation about cultural issues and how to address them in classrooms can serve as a vehicle to develop cultural identity, the same as participating in programs to increase cultural and intercultural knowledge (Genc & Bada, 2005). That said, negotiations about cultural issues can be regarded as the remedy for one of the problems of language teachers who encounter difficulty in the multicultural classes (Hollins & Guzman, 2005) in that it will help the EFL teachers to have a more appropriate reaction toward cultural issues in their classes.

The constructive role of negotiation about cultural issues in developing the cultural identity of the novice and experienced EFL teachers might be addressed through the concept of “visioning.” Visioning is defined as the way teachers are “expressing and examining existing beliefs” (Squires & Bliss, 2004, p. 758) in the way that it can contribute how teachers establish their own ideal classroom practices. Through negotiation on cultural issues, the novice and experienced EFL teachers established a new vision on how to use the cultural differences and cultural issues in the classrooms and prepare new practices which, later on, construct and develop their cultural identity based on these practices. As such, the teachers’ new visions obtained through participating in negotiations about prospective language class in which cultural issues are reacted to appropriately will develop their understanding about cultural issues and the related practices (Borko & Putnam, 1996).

One important code obtained through the narratives of the novice and experienced EFL teachers was the quality of negotiation which should not be ignored when preparing negotiation programs on cultural issues and how to use and handle them in EFL classes. Consequently, several factors should have considered to have qualified negotiation when addressing cultural identity development of the novice and experienced EFL teachers. The first factor is the power hierarchy of the negotiators, which includes the expertise in teaching and the materials to negotiate. This is related to the concept of power dynamics which “would greatly influence how teachers react to different situations and what decisions they make about their professional development” (Liu & Xu, 2011, p. 191). By the same token and through the results of the current study, it can be stated that when, for example, the negotiator starts negotiating cultural issues with the experienced EFL teachers who have a high degree of knowledge in teaching and general cultural concepts, the negotiator should be at the same expertise level or even higher and select appropriate materials to be negotiated to be helpful for the experienced EFL teachers.

Furthermore, emotion is another issue which can be influential in the quality of negotiation and finally, facilitative in developing novice and experienced EFL teachers’ cultural identity. As Day (2018) states, the understanding of emotional messages of the classroom can lead the teachers to conduct new practices influencing their identity to change. Having this point in mind, the negotiation sessions in general, and the negotiators in particular, should consider the emotional side of teaching in the negotiation about cultural issues. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the teachers to manage the emotional issues of their students. Students’ cultural issues are among the things which can be considered as the students’ values and they are emotional about them.

One more point to be taken into account when doing negotiation programs with respect to developing cultural identity of the novice and experienced EFL teachers is devoting special attention to the imagination phase proposed by Wenger (1998). As it was seen through the results obtained in the current study, except for the experienced EFL teachers, it was time consuming for other teachers to practice what they obtained through the negotiation sessions. That said, as Kanno and Norton (2003) define imagined communities as “groups of people not immediately tangible and accessible with whom we connect through the power of imagination,” (p. 241) there should be space for the language teachers to imagine their new cultural identity before practicing it in their classes. It is believed that preservice and in-service programs which are reflective in nature can be conducive since they help the teachers to reflectively practice the negotiated issues before class time.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The main thrust of the current study was to examine the role of negotiation about cultural issues on cultural identity development of the novice and experienced EFL teachers.



The results of the study indicated that negotiation about cultural issues had a constructive role in developing the cultural identity of the novice and experienced EFL teachers; thus, it can be regarded as a support for the hypothesis that addressing the cultural issues related to the EFL contexts can lead to the development of cultural performance, and ultimately, cultural identity of the novice and experienced EFL teachers (Rashidi & Meihami, 2017).

Through the information obtained in the current study, one can reach the conclusion that the cultural identity of the novice and experienced EFL teachers is a dynamic one (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009; Rashidi & Meihami, 2017). This indicates a crucial fact that the cultural identity of English language teachers can be worked upon in different stages of teaching from their very early stages until the late ones. Knowing that, by sticking to the dynamism of English language teachers' cultural identity, one can inject new concepts to establishing relationships by developing different aspects of these teachers. By so doing, the professional identity of the teachers can be worked upon which in its place contributes to the development of the teaching process. Hence, one can see that through negotiating cultural issues related to the context of English language teaching and using the dynamism of the cultural identity of these teachers, the development in cultural identity of these teachers will result (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Maclean & White, 2007).

The findings of the current study also revealed an important feature of negotiation which can contribute to the cultural identity development of the novice and experienced EFL teachers: The quality of negotiation. As stated previously in this study, the quality of negotiating about cultural issues which includes the power hierarchy of the negotiators, the motivating materials, and the inclusion of the emotion of the teachers are very crucial in the final cultural identity development of both novice and experienced EFL teachers. That said, for teacher education programs, pre-service or in-service, it is important to consider the quality of negotiation as the core of the program to help teachers obtain the most from the information exchanged in the process of the negotiation. Doing so, the negotiators should be familiar with different cultural conceptions in the EFL contexts; moreover, the negotiation process should not be unidirectional in which the negotiator will be the sender of the information and the teacher will be the receiver of it, but the whole process of negotiation should be an interactive one in order to address the teachers' emotion and motivation.

Addressing cultural identity development of language teachers has merited research attention due to its effect on the overall process of language teaching and learning (Fichtner & Chapman, 2011). This issue proposes that language teacher identity in general, and teacher cultural identity in particular, should be approached in pre-service and in-service programs to encourage and persuade language teachers to position and aware themselves in various cultural varieties (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Doing negotiation about cultural issues in language teacher educational programs will help the language teachers to critically reflect on their cultural affiliation, pushing them to a process of developing their cultural identity. In this sense, negotiation about cultural issues can be more than what Menard-Warwick (2008) mentioned as regular conversations about cultural instructions but leads them to learn "how to incorporate this self-understanding into their teaching" (p. 636).

The results of this study also indicated that negotiation about cultural issues which leads to cultural identity development of English language teachers can be addressed at every stage of their career, from novice teachers to the experienced ones. This indicates that English language teachers' awareness about the related cultural theories (Pennington, 2014) of classrooms can happen if the quality of negotiation will be guaranteed. If such an important teacher awareness raising take place, the results will be teachers' cultural identity development. The development in the cultural identity of the language teachers will, finally, lead them "to develop their knowledge and skill as language teaching professionals as they also continue to evolve an identity which they seek to both consistently perform in the classroom and connect

to the wider field of language teaching” (Pennington & Richards, 2016, p. 17). That said, language teacher educators should devote attention to cultural negotiation programs which develop the cultural awareness of language teachers in different stages of teaching profession.

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