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FROM EAP TO ESP: A TEACHER'S IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

In the past two decades, different aspects of teacher identity have been widely studied and discussed. However, in the field of English language teaching, the issue of identity among English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers seems to be an under-researched topic. This study focused on the narratives of a teacher to gain insight into her identity development during the process of becoming an ESP instructor. Data collection tools included initial reflection (before ESP instruction), learning journal, teaching journal, face-to-face meeting, and follow-up interview. Using the categorical analysis method, the study broke the collected texts into smaller units for descriptive treatment and examined some linguistic characteristics of this participant. The findings indicated an ESP teacher has to be prepared for extensive learning, be engaged in interdisciplinary collaboration, meet the expectations of trouble-shooting for a variety of problems, and undertake multiple tasks during lesson delivery. Most importantly, from EAP to ESP teaching, a teacher faces constant adjustments in teaching approach, lesson pace, and class activity. Therefore, new ESP teachers should be prepared for potential challenges in reconciling identity conflicts for professional growth.

Key Words: teacher identity, narrative inquiry, ESP teacher identity

INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, the issue of teacher identity has drawn much interest from researchers in not only social science but also language

teaching (Bell, 2002; Farrell, 2011; Hamilton & Clandinin, 2011; Johnson & Golombek, 2002, 2011; Johnston, 2003; Nguyen, 2017; Pavlenko, 2002, 2003, 2007; Tsui, 2007; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). In education, teacher identity has been employed as a research frame and a pedagogical tool. Varghese et al. (2005) emphasized that, "in order to understand language teaching and learning, we need to understand teachers: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them" (p. 22). Moreover, Urrieta (2007) suggested that identity affected how people came "to 'figure' who they are, through the 'worlds' that they participate in and how they relate to others within and outside of these worlds" (p. 107). It is believed that, through understanding teacher professional identity, both novice and experienced teachers receive the needed support to engage in professional development.

In Taiwan, as the country's competence relies on its tourism, trade, and technological development, there is a growing demand in strengthening the English proficiency of its workforce. As a result, the English curricula in many colleges and universities have actively tried to include more English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses for meeting this demand (Chen, 2011). Nevertheless, when teachers, even the experienced ones, try to make the transition from EAP (English for Academic Purposes) to ESP instruction, they are required to make at least some changes and adaptations, if not many. For some teachers, the transition is not smooth.

The major difficulty for those making the transition from EAP to ESP instruction partly lies in the fundamental differences between their instructional focuses. Clearly indicated by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p. 19). Thus, ESP instruction must address three important factors: the learner, the language chosen, and the learning context. It is necessary to understand why a certain group of learners with similar needs want to acquire the specified language. This emphasis on learners further shapes the necessity for a *needs analysis.* Also, suggested by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), ESP instruction features three *absolute characteristics* and five *variable characteristics.* Among the *absolute characteristics*, ESP is described as meeting "specific needs of the learner," employing "the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves," and centering on "the language (grammar, lexis, and register), skills,

discourse and genres appropriate to these activities" (pp. 4-5). Furthermore, among the *variable characteristics*, the most important feature is that ESP may adopt a methodology different from that of general English to suit the specific teaching situations. However, as ESP is viewed as *an approach* instead of *a product* (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) and "does not involve a particular kind of language, teaching material or methodology" (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998, p. 2), ESP teachers often face the challenges of making adjustments in both teaching approaches and classroom activities.

In the midst of this ESP development, the issue of ESP teacher identity has not been examined much, and the relevant information is scarce. Yet, with the increasing demand in ESP courses, how inexperienced ESP teachers make the transition to new teaching approaches/methodologies and adjust themselves to the new teaching capacity warrants more attention. This study aimed at filling the gap by examining a teacher's identity development as she made the transition from EAP to ESP instruction. Based on the significance of various emerging identities prioritized from this teacher's experience, the findings focused on the *shifting* and *multiple* features of her identities because they have brought significant impacts to her development as a teacher. It is this awareness of the emerging identities that brought this teacher much professional growth. Although teachers of all disciplines and from different contexts may develop similar identities, this study hopes to provide more in-depth understanding to the field of ESP, especially in the aspects of course preparation and teacher identity conflict, to benefit future ESP teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review mainly covers two parts. The first part focuses on the major characteristics of teacher identity and the associated challenges. The second part discusses *narrative inquiry* as a research tool and the categorical analysis method for understanding teacher identity.

Characteristics of Identity and Associated Challenges

Any discussion related to the examination of teacher identity development should start with the conceptions of identity. On this topic, the details provided by Rodgers and Scott (2008) help explain major

characteristics of identity and potential challenges facing teachers. These two researchers believe "identity is dependent upon and formed within multiple *contexts* which bring social, cultural, political, and historical forces to bear upon that formation" and "identity is formed in *relationship* with others" (p. 733). Moreover, they continue to emphasize "identity is shifting, unstable and multiple" and "identity involves the construction and reconstruction of meaning through *stories* over time." Among these characteristics, contexts and relationships constitute the *external* aspects of teacher identity development, whereas teachers' experiences and stories represent the *internal* aspects. For teachers to have a better understanding of their own beliefs, classroom practices, professional development, and impact on students, these different characteristics deserve further examination.

First, a teacher's identity is dependent on the contexts that he/she encounters. "Context" refers to the past and present landscapes where a teacher has lived and worked (Clandinin & Huber, 2005). Moreover, some researchers have equated identity to a contextual product. For example, Fitzgerald (1993) defined identity as "the *academic metaphor for self-in-context* (p. 3), and Coldron and Smith (1999) viewed context as "space and location" and described a teacher's identity as "a matter of where, within the professional pertinent array of possibilities, a particular person is located" (p. 174). In recent years, studies have revealed that teachers developed and shaped their teacher identity through either real-classroom teaching or further training in teacher education programs (Ilieva, 2010; Lee, 2010; Park, 2012; Simon-Maeda, 2004; Varghese et al., 2005). Their findings have shown that context exerts a strong force in shaping teachers' identities in different conditions.

Next, a teacher's identity development is relational. What a teacher does in his/her classroom and how he/she performs the role of a teacher is perceived and interpreted by those with whom he/she has come into contact. This observation echoes the findings of Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, and Fry (2004) when they concluded that identity was co-constructed "through engagement with others in cultural practice" (p. 21). Furthermore, other researchers have discovered that teachers often face multiple layers of relationships at their workplaces and experience the demand of making negotiations among different identities. In Samuel and Stephens' (2000) study, they found South African teachers not only had to develop "a personal teacher identity which sits comfortably with their own sense of self" but also had to assume the role as "the impetus

for change" by acting as critics to their mentors (p. 478). Also, the environment in which a teacher works represents another relational force. Farrell (2003, 2006) separately examined the effect of the support that a novice ESL teacher received from his school and colleagues and the transition that a first-year English teacher went through from a teacher education program to real-classroom teaching. Tsui (2007) investigated how teaching conditions and practices affected one EFL teacher's identity development and explored the struggle he experienced with multiple identities. In addition, Liu and Xu (2011) examined how a teacher reconciled conflicting selves to continue her teaching career with the influences of different forces in her workplace. Clearly, context and relationship greatly impact a teacher's identity development.

The last and most significant characteristic of identity is that it is shifting and multiple. Heavily influenced by context and relationship, a teacher often takes on multiple and changeable identities. In their study, Beijaard, Verloop and Vermunt (2000) suggested that teacher identity consisted of three sub-identities, including a subject matter expert, a pedagogical expert, and didactical expert. Then, when reviewing past studies on teacher identity, Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) concluded that the sub-identities demonstrated in a teacher's professional identity development were highly related to that teacher's different contexts and relationships. Therefore, these researchers explained that identity "is not a fixed attribute of a person, but a relational phenomenon" and "an ongoing process" (p. 108). Moreover, this ongoing process is often characterized by two processes: *identification* and *negotiation* (Horn, Nolen, Ward, & Campbell, 2008, p. 66). *Identification* describes the process in which teachers integrate their emerging identities into their existing identities, and *negotiation* is the process in which teachers modify their identities based on what they have encountered in teaching (p. 67). In other words, in new teaching experiences, emerging identities may become the targets of identification, while old identities may remain or become targets of negotiation.

Because identities can be shifting and multiple and are impacted by context and relationship, researchers (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 1999; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Sfard & Prusak, 2005) advised that identity should be studied through the practice of narrative or the telling of stories. These researchers also described identity as the equivalent of the construction of stories. Therefore, identity is both interpreted and constructed through the stories told by teachers themselves and those around them.

The characteristics discussed above provide the angles through which this teacher's transition from EAP to ESP instruction can be examined. More specifically, this teacher's multiple identities and the corresponding negotiations/reconciliations from the impact of her contexts, relationships, and experiences/stories can be further investigated.

Narrative Inquiry and Categorical Analysis

Beijaard et al. (2004) stressed that, in discussing any kind of professional role identity, the concept of *self* must be included. Moreover, "it is impossible [for teachers] to speak about the 'self' when there is no reflection" (p. 114). Sharing this view, Farrell (2008) encouraged teachers to use reflection as a means to bring their tacit conceptualizations to a level of awareness and to relate what they do in the classroom to their beliefs, knowledge, and values. Other researchers (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014; De Costa, 2015) also have studied foreign language teacher identity through a narrative lens. When reflecting on these aspects of their teaching careers, teachers can become "engaged in reflexive examination of their own beliefs and action," as suggested by Leung (2009, p. 53). Furthermore, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) stressed, "experience happens narratively," and "life is not how it was but how it is interpreted and re-interpreted, told and re-told" (p. 19). In narrative studies, the goal of both tellers (the research participants) and researchers is "to understand how the experiences constructed through their telling are endowed with meaning and significance" (Bilgen & Richards, 2015, p. 63).

Focusing on exploring teacher identity through teachers' own reflections, many studies have employed *narratives* as a research tool. Some researchers examined how teachers formulated and adjusted their identities at different stages of their teaching careers. More specifically, the studies conducted by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) used *narratives* to help teachers realize how their knowledge was constructed, while Johnson and Golombek (2016) believed that narrative activity could "ignite cognitive process" to help L2 teachers with their professional development (p. 14). Some researchers (Frank, 2000; Smith & Squire, 2007) emphasized the importance of paying attention to teachers' stories about the difficulties and challenges they experienced because teachers often negotiate and formulate their new identities through these experiences.

In addition, *narrative inquiry* is highly related to the work of Connelly

and Clandinin on curriculum reform (Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, Huber, Huber, Murphy, Orr, & Pearce, 2006). The reason for advocating the use of narrative in conducting educational research is that "humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). Using the expression of "stories to live by," these two researchers linked *narrative inquiry* with the issue of teacher identity (p. 4) because teachers' stories informed the field of how teachers made sense of their experience and practice. Furthermore, Xu and Connelly (2009) emphasized that "teacher identity expresses personal practical knowledge gained in experience, learned contextually, and expressed on landscapes of practice" (p. 223). Beijaard et al. (2004) also asserted that "through storytelling, teachers engage in narrative 'theorizing' and, based on that, teachers may further discover and shape their professional identity resulting in a new or different stories" (p. 121). From this perspective, the use of teachers' narratives, their stories, focuses on how teachers reflect on their beliefs, roles, and classroom practices.

When conducting a narrative analysis, a narrative researcher's main task is to interpret the stories that his/her target groups tell (Riessman, 1993), to examine "how protagonists interpret things" (Bruner, 1990, p. 51), and to probe into why a story was told in a certain way and what the storyteller meant (Franzosi, 1998). In such a pursuit, the form, structure, and content of narratives became the key points. In narrative analyses, the structuring and content of narratives are carefully studied to reveal key insights. Some researchers examine the narrative as a whole, whereas others may choose to break it down into component parts (Allport, 1962; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). Suggested by Lieblich et al. (1998), narratives can be examined either holistically or categorically, with emphasis given to either form or content. These angles further formulate a matrix of four cells, covering holistic-content, holistic-form, categorical-content, and categorical-form perspectives (p. 13). In the first two cells, the holistic-content mode of reading focuses on an individual's complete life story and the content it presents, whereas the holistic-form mode of reading examines the clearest expression through the plots or structure of complete life stories. In the latter two cells, the categorical-content approach extracts, classifies, and gathers an individual's utterances into defined categories, while the categorical-form mode of analysis has its emphasis on "discrete stylistic or linguistic characteristics of defined units of the narrative" (p. 13). As

this study centered on how Rachel (a pseudonym) made adjustments, reconciled identity conflicts, and adapted to her new role as an ESP teacher, the categorical analysis method covering both content and form was adopted.

To examine the identity development of a new ESP instructor, this study had several emphases. First, were some identities more influential than others during this teacher's transition from EAP to ESP instruction? Second, because teacher identity is a fluid concept, and several identities can co-exist at any given time, what were some identity conflicts that this teacher needed to resolve or reconcile? Last, were the detailed characteristics of seemingly shared identities different?

THE STUDY

The investigation of teacher identity formation on Rachel as an ESP teacher employed a narrative inquiry approach and a categorical analysis method. The purpose was to explore and witness Rachel's identity development through her "stories to live by," as described by Connelly and Clandinin (1999). Rachel's narrative was collected over a period of 40 weeks (roughly 10 months). This section covers Rachel's transition from an EAP to an ESP teacher (institutional assignment) and the data collection tools used in this study.

Previous Teaching Training

Rachel's educational training followed a regular path, like that of most English teachers in Taiwan. The only detail that marked the divergence of Rachel's education was she completed all her higher education in the US. In her undergraduate program and Master's program, Rachel's concentration was teacher training, followed by her doctoral study in Applied Linguistics. After that, Rachel returned to Taiwan and worked at a university. In her department, her course assignments were mostly EAP-related, and she was given total control of her classes.

Reasons for Becoming an ESP Teacher

Rachel faced the challenge of becoming an ESP teacher in her fourth year working at the university. Since 2015, the Ministry of Labor has allocated much funding to strengthen working professionals' English

ability in different workplaces.[1] For a company to apply for such funding, the application has to make specific what kind of English training is desired, and how such training will enhance the professionals' English competence. When the university was advised to work with industries for collaboration, Rachel's department saw this as an opportunity for growth and suggested the course of Engineering English. Rachel was willing to take on this challenge not because of departmental pressure but for potential professional growth.

The assigned course, Engineering English, was offered to in-service engineers at a technological company.[2] The engineers regularly held meetings with their foreign customers to discuss product-related issues, covering problems in design, design modification, performance, production, and quality assurance. When communicating with foreign customers, the engineers often encountered one common difficulty: their inability in providing explanations to address the issues raised by their customers. This need brought the engineers to apply for funding to enhance their English language competence.

Course Development

An initial needs analysis was conducted to shed light on the learning needs of the engineers. The results indicated that the instructional focus should be product-related details, covering vocabulary items and expressions, useful sentence patterns, and collocations. As all learners were from the same company, the company's products became the foci of course material preparation. To help Rachel gain a better understanding about the field that she was highly unfamiliar with, the company arranged meetings in which the engineers took turns introducing their products in Mandarin Chinese. After three weeks of intensive presentations, discussions and clarifications, the course format was decided. Rachel would be provided with real case studies (problems the engineers had previously encountered) as the basis for course materials. Different cases were provided two weeks before the actual discussion and course instruction for Rachel to understand the materials and to design lesson plans.

[1] Such a source of governmental funding is still available as of 2017.

[2] The planning of the course started around September 2015, and the course was offered in the first half of 2016.

Data Collection Tools

The entire period for exploring Rachel's identity development lasted nearly 40 weeks, covering the self-reflection of this teacher-participant, her three-week intensive contact with the participating engineers, and the 36-week actual ESP instruction. In these three phases, different tools were used. To know more about Rachel's teacher training and teaching career prior to this ESP experience, the tool of initial reflection was employed. Rachel composed four pieces of reflection on her previous teacher training and teaching experience. The goal was to understand how Rachel perceived herself as a teacher and what roles she typically played in teaching.

When this ESP assignment was confirmed and course duration was finalized, several tools were used to explore Rachel's transition from an EAP to an ESP instructor. Since Rachel spent three weeks communicating with the participating engineers and studying the materials they collected, this prior preparation was examined through Rachel's keeping of a learning journal that recorded how she processed the provided materials, clarified unclear concepts, created lesson plans, and selected methods of lesson delivery.

Furthermore, after the course began, a few more tools[3] were used to record and facilitate Rachel's ESP teaching. First, throughout the 36 weeks of instruction, Rachel kept a teaching journal in which she created weekly entries to document her experience (including progress, challenges, and difficulty) in preparing course materials, conducting course sessions, and interacting with her students. Second, bi-weekly face-to-face meetings (a total of 18 meetings) were conducted. The nature of such meetings was similar to that of the periodic reviews in a teaching practicum. This researcher obtained Rachel's consent in holding these meetings to share, discuss, and clarify any concern or challenge that Rachel encountered in ESP instruction. More specifically, having the experience as an ESP teacher herself, this researcher was able to assist Rachel with time management, mainly how to allot the two-hour instructional time in a more appropriate manner. Another objective of these meetings was to *troubleshoot* the problems in Rachel's lesson delivery. That is, this researcher's role to Rachel was more like a

[3] Suggested by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), data collection tools in a narrative inquiry include field-notes, journal records, interviews, storytelling, letter writing, and autobiographical/ biographical writing (pp. 5-6).

consultant[4] who she turned to for advice and support. Last, one month after the ESP instruction was completed, three follow-up interviews were held for the purpose of clarifying the details in Rachel's journal entries and for her to *relive the stories*. Each session lasted about two hours.

Data Analysis

The data collected in this 40-week period and the follow-up interviews were conducted in the following manner. For a better understanding of how Rachel viewed herself as an EAP teacher (or, in her words, an EFL teacher), her four pieces of reflection were carefully read by both the researcher and her teaching assistant. In analyzing the above-mentioned data, the researcher adopted the categorical analysis method suggested by Lieblich et al. (1998), and four steps were taken (pp. 112-114). First, all collected data were carefully read, and those pertinent to Rachel's preparation, teaching, and adjustment in the course of Engineering English were selected as "the subtext." Second, with the assistance of two judges (coders), the selected subtext was examined, and eight content categories emerging from the reading were identified and defined. Also, in this step, as an attempt to establish inter-judge reliability, the researcher and her assistant separately examined Rachel's first reflection (187 lines), discussed how Rachel's self-reflective descriptions should be categorized, and reached a more aligned interpretation of her experience. Then another three pieces of reflection (a total of 1,351 lines) were scrutinized by both coders to reach an inter-coder reliability of .87.

Next, in the third step, Rachel's ESP experience became the focus of data analysis. With the research framework of *reliving* Rachel's stories (her narratives), her three-week learning journal, 36-week teaching journal, and the bi-weekly face-to-face meetings were carefully examined. Altogether, a total of 11,321 lines of subtext were tallied, coded, and analyzed for explicit and implicit references in Rachel's identity development. According to Cohen (2008), the explicit references are the statements made by speakers to directly associate to a role identity, such as "a teacher" and "when we teach" (p. 83), whereas implicit references are expressions made by speakers when they

[4] For this researcher, such involvement made it possible for her to *live through* Rachel's stories, instead of examining Rachel from a more distant position as a researcher-observer.

construct identity roles "without stating or naming them directly" (p. 83). Then the frequencies of these identified roles were tallied to show which identities were more dominant in Rachel's ESP journey. Those identities that appeared fewer than three times were not listed in the final results. The same two coders were involved in the coding process of these 11,321 lines of subtext, and the inter-coder reliability was .84.

Last, research conclusions were drawn from the results. The frequencies of different identities were tallied to paint a rough picture of Rachel's ESP teacher identity development. Within the roles identified in Rachel's ESP experience, her identity development was closely studied from two angles. The first angle covered the identities that Rachel perceived as more predominant and influential in her new role as an ESP teacher. These identities were also characterized as "distinctively different" from her EAP experience, pushing (or *forcing*) Rachel to resolve or reconcile identity conflicts when making the EAP-to-ESP transition. The second angle centered on the *seemingly shared* identities for both EAP and ESP teachers, but some explanations were furnished to prepare future ESP teachers in interpreting these identities. Both angles have helped examine Rachel's path of transforming from an outsider (an EAP teacher) to an insider (an ESP teacher) and provided information for future ESP teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the analysis of the 11,321 lines of collected data, eight key identities were drawn from Rachel's ESP teaching experience. The sequences of these identities are arranged based on their frequency counts. It is true that, in a teacher's identity development, several identities can and may co-exist at the same time. However, when Rachel reflected on her ESP experience, she expressed "I *strongly feel* that some identities outweighed others, and such awareness should be emphasized for those who want to take up ESP instruction."

This section is divided into three sub-sections. First, four key identities were selected to elaborate how they impacted this new ESP teacher, and instances were taken from journals and meeting records. Second, because of the predominance of these four identities in shaping Rachel's ESP teacher development, examples were extracted to illustrate how Rachel came to reconcile with and adapt to these identities. Third, another four teacher identities that appeared to be overlapping with common EAP

teacher identities were closely examined to shed light on the properties that may differentiate an ESP teacher from an EAP teacher.

Predominant ESP Teacher Identities

Among the eight key identities that emerged from Rachel's ESP teaching experience (Table 1), this section focuses on how Rachel interpreted her identities of a learner, a collaborator, a multi-tasker, and a problem-solver. For her, these four identities represent a major departure from her EAP teacher identities, contributing significantly to her growth in this teaching experience.

Table 1

Key Professional Identities for an ESP Teacher (Based on Frequency of Occurrences)

Category	Frequency Counts	Definition/Characteristic
*learner	64	An ESP teacher has to ● acquire new knowledge constantly throughout the course instruction ● be willing to ask questions
communicator	42	● be equipped with good, if not excellent, ability in communicating with learners
*collaborator	37	● work closely with learners to create, adjust, and modify the materials used in instruction
*multi-tasker	34	● be able to multi-task, playing several roles at the same time ● be able to respond to unexpected situations or changes happening in class quickly ● be able to digest new information and come up with explanations/answers at the same time
presenter	31	● be able to present course materials or case studies clearly ● be equipped with a good ability in explaining the differences in language expressions, word choices, and sentence patterns.
*problem-solver	30	● be able to provide solutions quickly
evaluator	25	● be able to identify the weaknesses in learners and be able to explore how much has been understood by learners
manager	16	● know how to prioritize the to-be-acquired skills ● know how to deal with unexpected classroom situations

ESP Teacher as a Learner

In the analysis of the collected data on Rachel's ESP teaching experience, the identity of "an ESP teacher as a learner" stood out (with 64 occurrences). Although most teachers often describe themselves as learners, a reference derived from the fact that teachers always learn something new from students or the process of teaching, Rachel's references to this role outweighed all other identities. "An ESP teacher as a learner" is a role concluded from the sheer amount of knowledge that is required for an ESP teacher to acquire. Commenting on this "learner" identity, Rachel expressed "the amount of learning for knowledge acquisition in both jargon and engineering concepts, for me, is equivalent to taking up a new subject or a new discipline" (Bi-weekly Meeting 1). The following two excerpts were taken from Rachel's weekly journals.

> This week, I *studied* the components involved in the making of a product. I was not familiar with this product; therefore, I had to *familiarize myself with* the entire structure, the components, and the function of each part. Then I had to *understand the differences* between the first model and the second model. I found myself spending at least four hours, *trying to grasp* every detail. (Journal Entry 4)

> In today's class, a question about the density differences among four metals caught me off guard. The engineer used the corresponding chemical symbols, which I have long forgotten. I had to *re-learn* and remember their names for the rest of our discussion. (Journal Entry 10)

In addition to the above-mentioned efforts in acquiring new knowledge, Rachel highlighted the importance of new ESP teachers to "pick up a new trade," "quickly develop a basic understanding," "acquire new concepts," and "start as a beginner but grow fast" in the designated subject (Follow-up Interview 1).

ESP Teacher as a Collaborator

The role of "an ESP teacher as a collaborator" (37 occurrences) was concluded from how Rachel constructed her understanding of lesson materials with the participating engineers. At the beginning of the 36-week instruction, Rachel usually went into a class session with a

prepared lesson plan, and she described lesson implementation in the following words.

> A successful ESP lesson on Engineering English, from preparation to delivery, is a process of *collaboration*, for the course materials have to come from the participating engineers first. (Bi-weekly Meeting 7)
>
> Even when I, an experienced EAP teacher, have arranged the lesson details and thought about the lesson delivery well, a random question raised by an engineer can easily interrupt the original flow. Very often, because the content is highly technical, other participating engineers become my *helpers*. (Bi-weekly Meeting 6)

In her journal entries and the bi-weekly meeting details, the expressions of "we worked together," "we helped each other," and "the engineers and I had to brainstorm a better way" were frequently found. In one instance, Rachel explained how her students worked together to explain an issue that surfaced in one trouble-shooting session.

> Because not all the engineers came from the same department, some engineers from the QA Department *first had to explain* the background history of the issue for all classmates to understand. Then, the engineers from the Research & Development Department *took over the discussion*. Once I understood the whole issue, I was able to *resume my role* as a teacher and quickly organized a mini lesson plan. During the entire discussion, *we were collaborators, working together* to understand the problem. (Bi-weekly Meeting 5)

Towards the end of the 36-week instruction, the engineers developed the habit of bringing in their job-related questions. In those situations, Rachel said "I had to ask questions to aid my understanding. I feel we *collaboratively* made the lessons possible. Without collaboration, such a way of conducting a course will not be feasible" (Journal Entry 16).

ESP Teacher as a Multi-tasker

The role of "an ESP teacher as a multi-tasker" (34 occurrences) is used to identify a role in which the teacher is engaged in several tasks at the same time, requiring them to have quick responses. Although the capacity of multitasking is commonly seen in most teachers (referring to the fact that a teacher may be teaching, supervising his/her students, observing students' learning progress, and evaluating the effectiveness of

his/her teaching at the same time), an ESP teacher, according to Rachel, faces even a greater demand in this aspect. In her journal entries, Rachel mentioned that although the course materials were prepared beforehand, she frequently had to *make changes* to her lesson plans, *gauge* the appropriateness of examples, *check* learners' understanding, *double-check* her own understanding of the issues being discussed, and *be prepared* for unexpected situations. Consequently, this demanding nature of a multi-tasker pushed Rachel to respond to changes quickly. In retrospect, she furnished a detailed description for the identity of a multi-tasker.

> When standing in a class, an ESP teacher not only has to perform the roles that an EAP teacher plays but also has to take on the new roles of *constantly learning* new materials even with a well-designed lesson plan in hand, *working closely with* her students, in my case, the engineers, *devising timely answers* for unexpected questions within the class period, and *ensuring learners' understanding.* For me, the last task of *ensuring the understanding* of the participating engineers was of great importance because what was at stake was their job performance. (Follow-up Interview 1)

ESP Teacher as a Problem Solver

The role of "an ESP teacher as a problem solver" (30 occurrences) is developed because of how Rachel was viewed by her students. At the beginning of this project, Rachel was provided case scenarios and project details for lesson preparation. With a devised lesson plan, Rachel usually felt more in control of what would happen in an upcoming session. However, around the 10th week, the engineers started to bring in their "next day" projects and asked their ESP teacher how to express certain issues in English. Such a development was subtle at the beginning but soon became quite obvious. Different from a traditional classroom in which a teacher is viewed as a source of knowledge for many Taiwanese students, these engineers viewed their ESP teacher as a problem solver. In Rachel's words, she described how she felt about this new identity.

> This is definitely a new identity for me because I've never regarded 'problem-solver' as part of my teacher identity. Despite having answered tons of questions as an EAP teacher before, 'problem-solver' has never hit me as part of my identity. (Journal Entry 17)

According to Rachel, problem-solving, when guided by the participating engineers, became more difficult in the sense that "I often lack the context in which the issues were discussed, for example, previous product modifications, enhanced functions, or product defects. An ESP teacher must be provided with all details so he/she can ensure the effectiveness of the instruction" (Follow-up Interview 3).

Reconciliation between Different Identities

Throughout this ESP teaching experience, Rachel became more aware of her different teacher identities and realized the importance of identity reconciliation. When she was first assigned this ESP project, Rachel began "a journey full of many unknown factors" (Face-to-face Meeting 1), a journey that led her to resolve some identity conflicts. Among all the identities, three required reconciliation the most. These identities are "teacher as learner," "teacher as collaborator," and "teacher as multi-tasker." The following detailed accounts from different teaching moments are provided to show how the reconciliations of these identities are complicated and intertwined.

To begin with, when taking up ESP instruction, Rachel faced an unexpected yet ongoing process of knowledge acquisition. Consequently, the first identity conflict happened between "teacher as a knowledge provider" and "teacher as a learner." In the initial reflection Rachel composed before this ESP course began, she identified "knowledge provider" as one of her EAP teacher identities. Working at a university in Taiwan, her status as a professor automatically bestowed on her the role of knowledge provider. Rachel viewed passing on what she had learned to her students and helping her students acquire knowledge as one of her key roles as an EAP teacher. According to Rachel's previous experience, "textbooks were often assigned, and teachers as professionals relied on their previous training and learning experiences" (Follow-up Interview 1). For Rachel, her education and past training became her main sources of teaching support, enabling her "to modify the textbook content for putting together different teaching materials" (Initial Reflection 4). Within this context, as a knowledge provider, Rachel faced very little uncertainty in course preparation or delivery.

However, in the first three weeks before this ESP course started, Rachel received the materials provided by the engineers, and immediately, she began a learning process loaded with new jargon and concepts. "I was utterly overwhelmed because the amount of information

to be processed was huge. Worse yet, I struggled with the task of devising lesson plans. Even with a completed needs analysis, I knew very little about my target learners," said Rachel (Journal Entry 3). Furthermore, after the ESP instruction began, the weekly two-hour session was very similar to a *battle field* because despite having understood all the provided materials, Rachel still felt ill-prepared.

> My anxiety level was usually very high before a session began. On many occasions, some concepts that were fuzzy before a session started gradually became lucid with the input of the participating engineers. It was like they were my teachers. (Follow-up Interview 2)

> One advantage for EAP teachers is that we usually have a fairly good understanding about our college students, their learning history, and their knowledge scope. However, while working with the engineers, my only strength was my English language ability, but that ability alone was not enough to help me become an ESP teacher. (Follow-up Interview 3)

It was this understanding that brought about the reconciliation of the second identity conflict, "teacher as collaborator." As an EAP teacher, collaboration usually means cooperating with other fellow teachers. However, in this ESP course of Engineering English, the teacher had to collaborate with her learners. Rachel explained "for an ESP teacher working with professionals, the ability to collaborate with target learners and gain their support in successfully carrying out a lesson plan is similar to a survival skill" (Bi-weekly Meeting 11). In addition, the fact that Rachel constantly had to collaborate with the participating engineers, her learners, aggravated the demand on her to be a multi-tasker. To elaborate on the constant nature of collaboration in this ESP course and the load of multi-tasking, Rachel provided further details in the following scenario.

> One big challenge in working with these engineers was that they would often bring in a similar situation to ask me how the learned skills or expressions could be applied. For them, the two scenarios might have been very similar, but I felt I was facing a puzzle with many missing pieces. Under that circumstance, I had to be *clued in* and *taught* first, so I have learned to 'take the back seat' and *share* my 'teacher space' with the engineers. (Follow-up Interview 1)

> This teaching experience has taught me the importance of having the ability to *improvise*, to *learn things fast*, and to *make use of* the

> existing knowledge to organize a lesson plan right there in class. For me, as an EAP and an ESP teacher, the role of a multi-tasker or a quick thinker carries different meanings. (Follow-up Interview 3)

Shared Identities but Different Responsibilities

Among the key teacher identities concluded from Rachel's ESP experience (Table 1), the other four identities (communicator, presenter, evaluator, and manager) were characterized by Rachel as "shared identities between EAP and ESP teachers," but future ESP teachers should cultivate additional awareness about these seemingly familiar identities.

In this ESP course of Engineering English, these four identities have distinctive features. First, although both EAP and ESP teachers have to play the role of a communicator to convey course material to their learners successfully, the role of "an ESP teacher as a communicator" focuses on the fact that this ESP teacher, Rachel, had to know how to help the engineers learn, in English, the concepts they already knew very well. "Choosing the most appropriate expressions or sentence patterns for clear communication was often *the* challenge," said Rachel (Journey Entry 3). The following excerpts provided further details.

> Facing the whole class of 24 engineers, I suddenly realized they were adult learners with specialized skills. The word choices and sentence patterns chosen for them to improve their communication with their clients have to be *precise, direct,* and *efficient.* They may not know many fancy English expressions or phrases, but they are intelligent in their field, and what they need are the tools for effective communication. (Journal Entry 1 & Follow-up Interview 2)

> I made a mistake of organizing lesson content from a language teacher's angle rather than an engineer's position. I immediately had to come up with other examples to *better explain* the concepts. I found the use of *analogies* very useful. I continually have to find common ground for us *to communicate* because it directly impacts how the engineers communicate with their clients. (Journal Entry 5 & Follow-up Interview 3)

Second, the role of "a teacher as a presenter" is highly related to the practice that teachers have to present their course materials to learners clearly and effectively. Moreover, to help learners acquire the intended concepts, teachers have to deliver the lessons not only clearly but also

meticulously. In this aspect, the factors of one's *body language*, one's *manner of speaking*, one's *logic in material arrangement* and one's *lesson presentation* can greatly impact the success of a lesson. Although an EAP teacher and an ESP teacher share these features and abilities in their capacity as "a presenter," Rachel emphasized one important characteristic in this ESP experience. In Engineering English, because many of the lessons involved real products, "when choosing examples for illustrating major points in a lesson plan, I have to make sure the examples are well-chosen and well-arranged in the PowerPoint or on my handouts" (Journal Entry 13). The following scenario illustrated the qualities of a good presenter.

> I actually had to teach with *the product in one hand* and *a pen in the other*. When I showed the engineers how to describe the ways that a certain modification would impact a product's performance, I had to use *the visual aid* to help deliver the lesson content. (Journal Entry 9)

Furthermore, although both EAP and ESP teachers have to evaluate their students' learning progress as well as performance, one piece of advice for those ESP teachers working with professionals in different industries is that the means of evaluating learners' performances may be described as "unconventional." Traditionally, EAP teachers rely on tests, exams, assignments, and term papers to evaluate their students. However, in this particular case study, the participating engineers were mostly evaluated through their work performance. Moreover, their performance was evaluated by three parties, including the ESP instructor, the engineers themselves, and their supervisors. First, Rachel provided the participating engineers with comments on their assignments and in-class performances to help the engineers know their weaknesses and the way to improve their learning outcomes. However, as the engineers constantly faced similar challenges in their communication with foreign clients, the engineers soon assumed the role of an evaluator, for they themselves knew best whether what they had learned in the ESP course was helpful for their job performance. In addition, at the end of this course, their supervisors were surveyed for their input or comments of this course.[5] In Rachel's words, "as an ESP teacher working with the

[5] Such survey results were collected by the HR Department of the company for evaluating this ESP course. Because the results were not part of this research, Rachel was only notified that the supervisors were satisfied with the ESP course.

participating engineers, I didn't conduct any formal assessment of their learning outcomes, a very different feature from my regular EAP teacher responsibility" (Follow-up Interview 3).

In addition, the role of "a teacher as a manager" refers to a teacher's attempt in managing the situations happening in a classroom. For both EAP and ESP teachers, their responsibilities related to class management are very similar. However, in this case study, how Rachel managed her class as an ESP teacher was slightly different. In identifying Rachel's capability as teacher as manager, attention was given to verbs and expressions such as *handling*, *dealing with*, *controlling*, *taking* measures, *addressing* the issue/point/problem, and *managing*. In one follow-up interview, she elaborated on the differences of "ESP teacher as manager."

> Different from a regular classroom in which I often have to manage student behaviors, my job in an ESP course is to *manage the unexpected*. A few times, I actually misunderstood the materials and had to modify the lesson plans right there in the discussion session. Other times, the engineers came to class sessions with urgent problems that had to be solved immediately. Naturally, our original class pace was interrupted abruptly. That is why learning to manage the unexpected situations is of great importance. (Follow-up Interview 2)

Rachel's ESP experience is informative in two ways. First, the challenges, difficulties and setbacks she went through on this ESP journey have unveiled what future ESP teachers may encounter when they teach ESP courses involving different disciplines. Second, since each teacher has a different training background and learning history, the in-depth study of one's teaching experience, like Rachel's, enables the English teaching community to better understand a different teaching practice.

CONCLUSIONS

This course on Engineering English received very a positive evaluation from the participating engineers at the end of the course.[6] Moreover, for Rachel, this ESP instructional experience brought her

[6] According to the end-of-class evaluation from Rachel's students, the engineers, this course was perceived as extremely successful because the instruction was described as "tailor-made," "useful," and "pertinent to work-related scenarios."

much professional growth. It is hoped that the field of ESP would find the insights generated from Rachel's stories informative. To begin with, for EAP teachers taking on ESP courses, they need to expect the impacts brought by different contexts and relationships. As teacher identity is not fixed but shifting and changeable, teachers have to prepare themselves for the emergence of new self/selves (the process of *identification*) and the modification of their identities based on what they encounter in the new teaching conditions (the process of *negotiation*). As suggested by Horn et al. (2008), it is such an ongoing process of *identification* and *negotiation* that characterizes a teacher's identity development. Furthermore, through reflecting on their own stories (their *experiences*), teachers will develop a higher level of awareness of their varying identities.

Such an understanding can be applied to an ESP course offered in both a school setting and an off-campus setting like the one described in Rachel's case. To become ESP instructors, teachers have to become *learners* to acquire new concepts and jargon through new materials. Moreover, such a learning process may continue throughout their ESP instruction periods. Most importantly, ESP teachers have to pay attention to how they *work with* target learners, *communicate* with these learners, and *present* their teaching materials. In cases similar to Rachel's, teachers need to develop the awareness that knowledge of a specified discipline is co-constructed by both teachers and students, meaning that teachers will become *collaborators* in constructing this new learning environment and building the new scope of knowledge to be acquired. Especially when ESP courses are offered to professionals, teachers have to develop the habit of *asking for clarifications*, *quickly responding* to changes, and engaging in *multiple tasks*. However, allowing learners to become knowledge co-constructors does not mean teachers have to relinquish the control of their courses. Rather, such a process should be regarded as an opportunity for both teachers and learners to exercise agency in further learning. Second, for new ESP teachers, it is suggested that they learn from Rachel's practice of keeping journals for the purposes of learning from their new experience and documenting their progress. Identity is not a fixed notion, and Rachel's experiences have echoed Wenger's (1998) suggestion that identity develops through one's day-to-day experiences which can only be obtained through participation in specified groups.

It should be emphasized that different identities developed by

teachers themselves may affect their success in course instruction and students' learning outcomes. For this reason, teachers need to be aware of the need to negotiate and re-negotiate their existing identities. Only when teachers better understand their identity development, can their contribution to the relevant settings, the learning environment, and the learning dynamic be optimized.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although this study has offered informative findings, there are two limits. First, these findings on ESP teacher identities are taken from one teacher, making the identified roles quite subjective. Yet, the purpose of this study was not to change teachers' perceptions about their roles in teaching but to add more understanding to ESP teacher identity development. Moreover, Rachel's case was unique in that she had to change herself, including her usual approach to teaching materials and her arrangement of course progression, to meet the needs of the engineers participating in this training course. For this aim, many of the adjustments she made could provide insight to both seasoned and prospective ESP instructors. In the future, more studies of ESP teachers in different settings should be encouraged, so the field of ESP will gradually formulate a more complete picture of their identities. Second, Rachel's course was a special program formulated under the funding of the Ministry of Labor. Whereas most ESP courses in Taiwan now are offered in universities and colleges, similar studies carried out in regular programs may generate different findings. With different groups of target learners, the emerging teacher identities may vary.

Further studies on ESP teacher identity can take several directions. For example, in recent years, ESP courses on tourism English or English for hotel management, culinary arts, and food/beverage management are offered in different universities. Similar studies on teacher identity can be carried out to advance the understanding of the ESP field. Then new insights about teacher identity may be incorporated into teacher training to better prepare teachers for their career development. Similar to how the identity studies conducted on novice teachers have helped improve some TESOL programs, more understanding on ESP teaching practice and teacher identity development will help provide support for the ESP profession.

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從學術英文到專業英文：
檢視一位教師之教師認同發展

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過去二十年間，「教師認同」引起廣泛討論，但關乎「專業英文(ESP)」老師之相關研究則非常少。本研究檢視一位 EAP 課程老師在準備、教授企業 ESP 課程之過程，透過其個人經歷、省思，探討其「教師認同」發展與角色轉變。資料收集工具包含教師個人課前省思、備課與授課日誌、雙週訪談、研究後訪談。歸類分析之研究結果顯示，ESP 教師必須吸收大量新知、學習跟學生共同架構知識，扮演 ESP 學習議題的問題解決者、在課堂中有著多工角色，在教學方式、課程進度與活動方面，需持續調整自己。此外，ESP 教師必須調整自身的不同角色，並解決不同角色之間的衝突。

關鍵詞：教師認同、敘事探究、專業英文教師認同