



CONSTRUCTING THE SELF: EFL TEACHER NARRATIVES

A Thesis submitted by

Maria Angeli Pinto, BA (Hons); MEd

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Abstract

The study provides a holistic snapshot of the personal and professional lives of long-term native English-speaking (NES) English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teachers. I interviewed eight NES EFL teachers, four working in South Korea, and four in Japan. The teachers had taught EFL for at least ten years and had taught English in two or more countries. The teachers talked about their backgrounds, their attitudes to language learning and the languages they had learnt, about teaching and the workplaces and countries they had worked in. They discussed the most challenging aspects of living and working in other countries, and how their experiences in other countries had changed them. My stories of how my life impacted on the design of the study, and how conducting the study changed my life appear as reflections between the chapters.

Narrative inquiry, which foregrounds the voices and viewpoints of research participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), was used to analyse and report on the teachers' stories. Narratives were analysed both holistically and categorically (Josselson, 2011). In the holistic analysis, what the teachers said was analysed as part of their whole narrative. In the categorical analysis, similar themes that emerged in the teacher's stories were compared and the findings of these discussed. To perform the categorical analysis, the teachers' stories were coded using grounded theory principles outlined by Charmaz (2006).

The teachers' stories add to the growing body of literature on NES EFL teachers. The study confirmed and added detail to what has been known about NES EFL teachers: that personal reasons power teachers' decisions to stay in EFL. Long term NES EFL teachers used sideways moves, into teaching different levels, teaching at different workplaces, and teaching in different countries, and set their own professional development goals, to maintain their motivation. The study found that the country itself made a difference to the degree to which the teacher chose to assimilate into the local culture, and that teachers' attitudes to learning the local language were a good predictor of their investment in staying in the country. The teachers in Japan were more focused on learning Japanese and meeting local norms than the teachers in South Korea, even when the teachers in South Korea expressed positive feelings towards the country. It is hypothesized that the differences might have been because

of age differences, differences in the amount of time spent in the country, or because of relationship status differences between the teachers in South Korea and the teachers in Japan. Seven of the eight teachers agreed that living in other countries had changed them dramatically, comparing who they are now to an imagined baseline self that they would have been had they stayed home, to talk about their personal growth.

Certification of Thesis

This Thesis is entirely the work of Maria Angeli Pinto except where otherwise acknowledged. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Ann Dashwood

Associate Supervisor: Associate Professor Jeong-Bae Son

Student and supervisors' signatures of endorsement are held at the University.

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List of abbreviations

AET	Assistant English teacher (Japan); <i>see also ALT</i>
ALT	Assistant language teacher (Japan); <i>see also AET</i>
BANA	Britain, Australasia, and North America
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELT	English language teaching
EPIK	English Program in Korea
ESL	English as a second language
Hagwon	Private afterschool tutoring facility in Korea
JALT	Japan Association of Language Teachers
JET program	Japan Exchange and Teaching program
LET	Local English teacher; <i>see also NNEST</i>
KOTESOL	Korea TESOL
NES	Native English Speaker, <i>also native English-speaking when followed by 'teacher'</i>)
NEST	Native English-Speaking teacher
NNEST	Non-native English-speaking teacher; <i>see also LET</i>
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

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Chapter 1: Introduction

We live in a postmodern age. The certainties of modernism have given way to fragmented identities, fragmented selves (S. Hall, 1996). Globalization has brought cultural and national identities under scrutiny (Y. Y. Kim, 2012; Saint-Jacques, 2015). People have multiple identities, which they re-shape according to who they are interacting with and the allegiances they claim (Gee, 2008; Tipton, 2009). In the global marketplace, nations and cultures compete, cooperate, and interact. Migration has reached unprecedented levels, with more people moving across nation boundaries than at any time in the past (Graddol, 2006). Native English-speaking (NES) teachers of English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) form part of this migration, being in high demand, particularly in countries in Asia (Copland, Davis, Garton, & Mann, 2016). English has grown from the first language in a minority of countries, to a basic skill, a global *lingua franca*, where the vast majority of interactions in English are carried out between two non-native speakers of the language (Graddol, 2006). Negotiating their way through this minefield of competing identities and discourses, we have individuals –teachers– making sense of their worlds, and conveying this sense through their words (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Lives –and the meanings of those lives– are created, modified, negotiated, in ‘the stories teachers tell’ (L. W. Anderson, 1997).

Teachers’ stories are an important way of collecting information on teachers’ lives and work. The stories told by EFL teachers have had many foci. They have focused on EFL teacher experiences in general (Alptekin & Alptekin, 1984; Choi, 2008; Copland, Garton, & Mann, 2016; Fithriani, 2018; Phillips, 1989) or on different aspects of the teachers’ experiences: such as the problems of cultural differences in the classroom (Simpson, 2008; D. Tang & Absalom, 1998); the experiences of native English-speaking teachers who are not White (Javier, 2010) (as well as a range of other narratives in Nunan and Choi’s (2010) collection of EFL teacher stories); or NES teachers working with local teachers (S.-Y. Kim, 2016). Previous studies have focused on native English-speaking teachers, non-native English-speaking teachers, or a mix of these, working in specific countries (Joun, 2015; D. Tang & Absalom, 1998; R. R. Wang, 2005), or teaching specific age ranges or working in particular schooling contexts (Alpaugh, 2015; Christensen, 2014; Johnston, 1997; Joun, 2015; Matikainen, 2015). What we know is that most native English-speaking teachers

(NESTs) enter the field by chance, often without teaching qualifications, stay in it for a few years, and then leave (Alpaugh, 2015; Gilman, 2016; Johnston, 1997; Joun, 2015; Mullock, 2009; Phillips, 1989; Tsutsumi, 2013). However, some teachers stay for a long time, and begin to regard EFL teaching as a job for a lifetime (Gilman, 2016; Mullock, 2009).

This study was motivated by the desire to investigate the lives of long-term NES EFL teachers, as constructed through their stories: how they constructed their present and past, their narratives of teaching and living in different countries, and how they saw their relationships with their home country and with the countries in which they had lived and worked. ‘Long-term,’ in this study, was defined as teachers who had taught EFL for at least ten years and in at least two different countries. The ‘native’ in ‘native English speaker EFL teachers’ refers here to teachers from the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and Canada.¹ ‘EFL teacher’ refers to people teaching English as a foreign language in South Korea or Japan. Eight teachers working in South Korea or Japan, who had taught English for at least ten years, and had taught in at least two different countries were interviewed – their stories appear in Chapters [4](#) and [5](#).

1.1 Research aims and questions

This thesis ‘Constructing the self: EFL teacher narratives’ focuses on the lived experiences of eight long-term NES EFL teachers working in South Korea and Japan. It aims to provide a holistic snapshot of the teachers: of their personal and professional lives, and of how they think that living and working in other countries has changed them.

The main research questions for this study were:

- 1. How does the experience of teaching in a non-English-speaking, non-native land contribute to or shape a native English-speaking teacher's sense of self and identity?*
- 2. How do NES EFL teachers negotiate their relationship with their national identity and identity as a foreigner abroad?*

¹ This comes from a belief in South Korea (see www.epik.go.kr) and Japan (Olsen, 2018) that ‘native’ English speakers originate from the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa.

The first question focused on the NES EFL teacher at work. It examined the interaction of teaching, identity, and culture in the workplace. The second research question focused on the teacher as an individual, coming from, and previously embedded in a certain national and cultural context, and living and working in a different national and cultural context. It looked at the changes to the social identities the teacher claimed: their national identity, ethnicity, group membership. The questions were complementary, focusing on different aspects of identity and the expression of identity.

The questions shared certain common themes: an exploration of self and identity when living and working in a country with different cultural mores; an investigation into how individual identity and social identity (national, cultural, ethnic, group membership) were affected by living and working for long periods of time outside the home country or culture; how a language teacher coped with teaching English and learning other languages in different cultures. With both questions, the focus was on the interaction of *self* and *Other*, where the *Other* was the other culture (or cultures) that the teacher was exposed to. In keeping with qualitative research principles, the research questions were *hypothesis-generating* (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003), not *hypothesis-testing*. The questions were designed to discover information on areas of interest: the construction of identity in different countries, when challenged by different ways of viewing the world; changes in identity, and changing perspectives on home and abroad through living abroad.

1.2 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study explores the links between individual identity, societal and cultural factors that influence identity, and the effect of time and language on an individual's sense of self. Figure 1.1 depicts the links between identity, culture, language and time that underlie the study. The two circles (worlds) represent different cultures and nations: where the teacher comes from, and where the teacher currently works. Time, the arrow, depicts the linear progression of a person's life, moving chronologically from past to future, moving spatially/physically from one place to another. Over time, as they get older, people might change their beliefs, add to knowledge, reflect differently on past events, and develop different hopes for the future. EFL teachers, in particular, move from their

home culture or country to one or more other cultures or nations. The stick figures place two people in each culture, facing each other, to represent the interactional nature of identity: for *self* to be expressed, there must be an *Other*, to affirm or challenge our perceptions of self. The different seating (on a chair, cross-legged on the floor) represents different cultural norms. The speech bubbles in each culture show different languages, reflecting the importance of language in constructions of both culture and identity. The study explored the changes that occurred to a NES EFL teacher's identity, over time, as he or she moved from one culture to another.

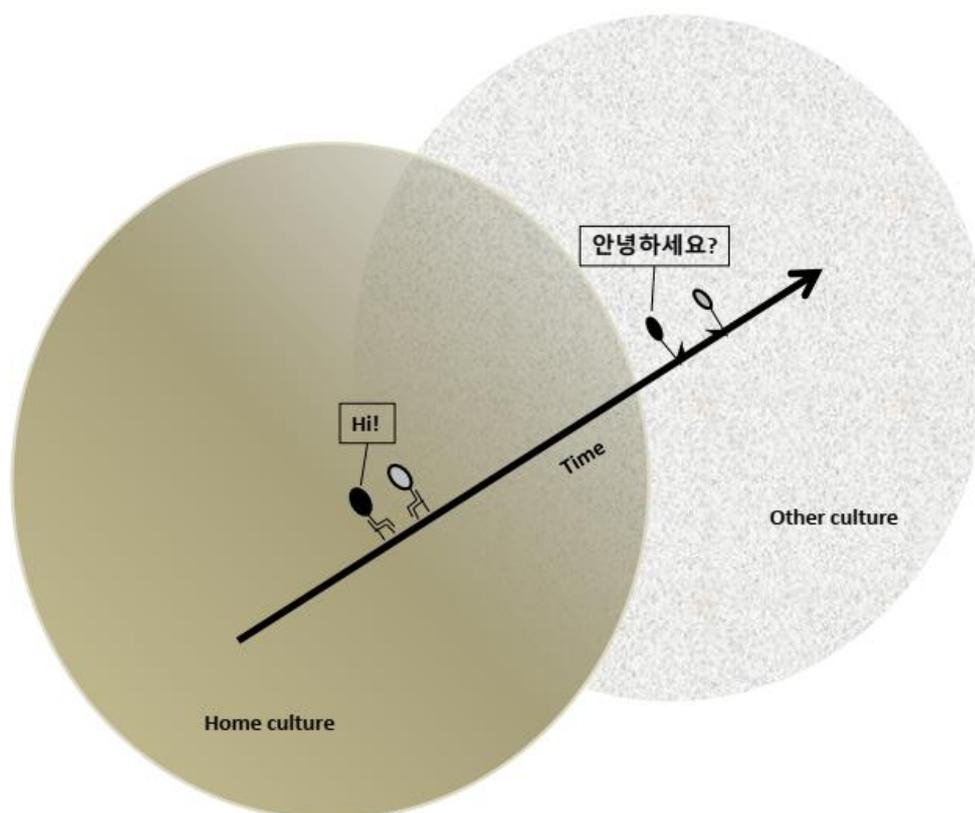


Figure 1.1: Identity is modified by time, language and culture.

The study focused on the following aspects of long-term NES EFL teachers' perceptions of their lives and work: their relationship with their home country and the country in which they lived, their ideas on how they had changed as teachers and what they had learnt about teaching after ten or more years living and working in other countries, and their attitudes towards learning languages and adapting to different cultures. The study was therefore focused on exploring three facets of self: personal identity, teaching self, and an 'embedded' self, where 'embedded' reflected the enculturated self, coming from particular cultural, ethnic, social, national and (if

the teachers raised the topic) religious contexts. In Figure 1.2, the three aspects of self appear at the points of a triangle. The triangle signifies that these aspects are related or linked, and do not appear in isolation. The eye in the middle of the triangle refers to both the homonym “I” – the self that *is*, and to the gaze of the *Other*, which also affects the self.

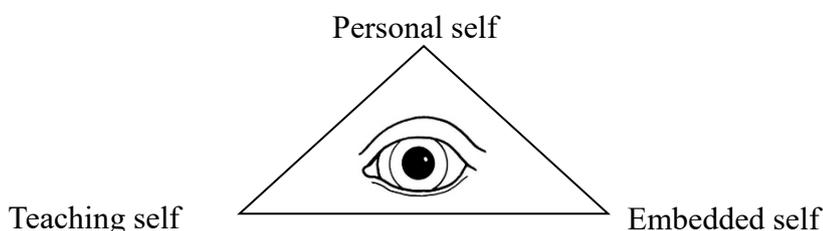


Figure 1.2: Facets of identity

The following assumptions formed a starting point for the investigation of identity in this study: Personal identity does not exist in isolation. It is modified and affected by national identity (Asari, Halikiopoulou, & Mock, 2008; Bukh, 2007; Rosman, Rubel, & Weisgrau, 2009), cultural identity (Eller, 2009; Minami, 2002), ethnic identity, by other people’s opinions (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011) and behaviour, and by time. In the workplace, past and present experiences (Aguiar, Nam, & Seong, 2015; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Bukor, 2013; Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Farrell, 2018a), and the teacher’s and the students’ emotions and experiences (Day & Leitch, 2001; Farrell, 2016, 2018a, 2018b; Zembylas, 2003), combine to shape and modify teacher identity. Asking about past and present experiences and giving teachers space to talk about their lives helps develop a more comprehensive picture of long-term NES EFL teachers’ constructions of identity.

People do not exist, and are not raised, in isolation. They are influenced by other people: family members, friends, colleagues, acquaintances. Their behaviour is affected by how they are seen and treated by other people, while how they treat others grows out of their past experiences, and also influences how they are seen by others. An exploration of *self* is simultaneously an exploration of ideas of the *Other*, and of the influence of the *Other* on the *self*.

Communities of people share beliefs as to how the world works, and their place in that world. As with personal identity, forging a group identity is about differentiating

between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011). The terms ‘cultural identity’ and ‘national identity’ are used when describing the way in which groups differentiate between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and create a cohesive sense of ‘us’. The *other* exists on the personal as well as the national level (Weedon, 2004). An individual accepts the characteristics that form national identity, or cultural identity, to various extents. Their internalization of these will change over time. Theories that have focused on differences between cultures (E. T. Hall & Hall, 1987; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Nisbett, 2003) and on different conceptualizations of national identity (B. Anderson, 2006; Kobayashi, 2011; Y. Lee, 2009; Moodley & Adam, 2012) make broad generalizations, as do theories that look at how individuals adjust to living and working in other countries (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Berry, 1997). These are best supplemented by individual, experiential accounts of adjusting to cultural differences and to living in other countries, which this study offers.

A NES EFL teacher is a person like any other: with a past that influences their present, and a projected future that they are working toward (Bukor, 2013; Riley, 2007). Part of the baggage they carry are their own past experiences, in different places and situations, and what they have learnt from these. How they see themselves derives in part from how they interpret events in their past (Bukor, 2013). A study of identity, therefore, is a snapshot along – and of - a continuum of selfhood, self-interpretation, and being. Language is at the heart of the NES EFL teacher’s job: teaching English in countries where another language is predominant. Therefore, learning the local language and developing proficiency in it also forms a part of assimilating into another country.

The assumptions all prioritised the individual: his or her experiences and framing of those experiences. As an emic participant in the research, I have also included my stories, between the chapters. These stories are told in the first person, to highlight the influence of the person on their research – and, later, the ways in which the research can influence the researcher. In the section below, the Background to the study, I use the first person to trace the genesis of the study in my own past.

1.3 Background to the study

The researcher you are is the person you are.

The quote above was the title of an essay I was asked to write for my Master's degree. In writing the essay, I discovered that I was a qualitative researcher, interested in stories, and how these reflect the worlds we inhabit. Qualitative research is about people: the research subjects, and the researcher, and the interaction between them. There are strong links between researchers' lives and work, between their "personal biographies and their scholarly work" (Skerrett, 2008, p. 143). To outline the background to the study, I therefore start with a brief biography.

I was born in India, to English-speaking parents. English is my first language – though I also learnt Hindi as a child. I moved, with my family, to Australia when I was 14, and it felt like coming home. I went to a public high school in Australia, on Sydney's Upper North Shore, which was then a fairly homogenous White world – I was one of only three people of Indian descent, and one of only 5 non-White students among about 200 students in the same year. Since I spoke English fluently and comprehensibly, I assimilated into the school population.

The paragraph above gives the abbreviated version of my childhood and teenage years that I wish were the authoritative version. It reduces the first seventeen years of my life to unproblematic conformity and homogeneity. I get to leave out all the strangenesses of growing up in an Indian Catholic minority, where being Catholic meant going to church, speaking English, and wearing 'Western' clothes (these being dresses and pants) while living in Hindi-speaking, Hindu-majority parts of India. I skip over the differences between an urban, upper middle class Catholic Indian upbringing and that of the 'average' Indian girl or woman that exists in the popular imagination (see Reflection R1). I get to leave out the culture shock of moving from a convent boarding school for girls in the foothills of the Himalayas to a co-educational public school in Australia and the realization that I had swapped one sort of visibility (religious minority, wearing 'Western' clothes and speaking English) for another (skin colour, features, and perceived ethnicity).

To return to the short, education-focused, version of my life story: My undergraduate degree was in Arts and I did Honours in English literature. While I was at university, I started tutoring high school students, predominantly highly-motivated Asian immigrants, in English. Then I moved out of education, and did not think of returning to teaching till I decided, four years later, that I wanted to give myself "three selfish years" to travel around the world: two in London on the working

holidaymaker visa, and one travelling around Latin America and learning Spanish. I enrolled in a CELTA course, so that I could teach English while I was learning Spanish, and taught ESL briefly in Australia between my stays in the UK. I was busy being Australian, and, in the multicultural worlds I lived in, no one had problems accepting me at my own valuation.

I started my EFL teaching career in El Salvador, working at two private language schools there for six months while studying Spanish at a local university. I then moved to Mexico to teach at a university in the state of Oaxaca, and ended up staying in Mexico for three years, moving with a colleague from my first university to a second to set up the English language teaching program at the second university. I moved to South Korea in the sixth year of my “three selfish years” to teach at a rural university, with three goals in mind: I planned to pay off my home loan, to pay for a Master’s degree in Education, and to return to Australia with my two Mexican cats². When one of the cats fell ill in Korea, and I was told that he would be sacrificed upon arrival in Australia if he still had the virus in his system when we got there, teaching EFL moved, unbeknownst to me, from a job to a career. I ended up living in South Korea for six years, and then returning to Mexico, where I still live. I now have a tenured position at the first university I worked in in Mexico, and have been here for seven years. I have been teaching English for around eighteen years, and teaching EFL for more than fifteen years. (Both cats are still alive and healthy.)

In 2008, when I wrote the outline for this research project, I had realized that I was unlikely to return to Australia, and was interested in the stories of *people just like me*, who I defined as “*native English-speaking EFL teachers who had been teaching EFL for at least ten years, and had taught English in two or more countries.*” I wanted to explore what qualities and insights long-term NES EFL teachers shared, that we could offer to new teachers. I was interested in how our concepts of self, our ideas of teaching, and our notions of belonging shifted, after a long period of time living outside our home countries.

² Australia has very strict quarantine rules, and only accepted pets from about 40 countries in the world at that time. I downloaded the Australian Quarantine Immigration Service (AQIS) list of countries from which Australia would accept pets, and looked for jobs in those countries. The job offer that offered the best conditions for the cats and for me came from South Korea.

1.4 Contribution to knowledge

Thus, the purpose of this study was to add to the literature on NES EFL teacher experiences, especially with regard to the factors that kept the teachers teaching, their degrees of assimilation into the non-English-speaking cultures of South Korea and Japan, and their reasons for beginning and continuing to work in non-English-speaking environments. The studies that had been conducted earlier on EFL teachers blended the stories of teachers with different amounts of teaching experience (Alpaugh, 2015; Cowie, 2011; Johnston, 1997; Mullock, 2009), blended the voices of pre-service and in-service teachers (Phillips, 1989), interviewed teachers who were working in different countries (Gilman, 2016; Neilsen, 2011; Waites, 1999), or blended the voices of native and non-native English-speaking teachers (Tsutsumi, 2013). This study set distinct parameters to the teachers who would be interviewed: they had to have taught in at least two different countries, and have taught English for at least ten years. The teachers also had to be working in South Korea or Japan at the time of the interviews. The idea was that these teachers had all experienced working in different countries, and were experienced EFL teachers, therefore their stories would provide insight into the ways living and working in South Korea and Japan –countries seen as very culturally different (E. T. Hall & Hall, 1987; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Nisbett, 2003; Tweed & Lehman, 2002) to the US, the UK, and Canada, where the teachers came from – affected long-term NES EFL teachers. Eight long term NES EFL teachers, four working in South Korea, and four in Japan, were interviewed: with a small sample size, the stories collected cannot be representative of all teachers, however, they provide a data base for the exploration of the stories and lives of teachers.

The study provides insight into the stressors that affect long-term NES EFL teachers in South Korea and Japan. It explores how teachers living and working in these countries cope and how their view of themselves is modified or reinforced. The teachers' voices give insight into the ways in which long-term NES EFL teachers adapt to working in different cultures. The study shows the impact of the country and culture on NES EFL teacher identity. It also adds to the literature on the social, professional and cultural identity of EFL teachers, and to the literature and information on perceptions of self of NES EFL teachers. Graddol (2006) talked of the NES EFL teacher being supplanted by non-native English-speaking EFL teachers

as English language proficiency grew in countries where English was not an official language. This study was designed to record what Graddol saw as a dying world: one of NES EFL teachers living in and adapting to different countries and cultures.

1.5 Terms and definitions

There are several acronyms that are used in the field of English language teaching, and terms that are used in qualitative research to refer to different ways of conducting a study. A definition of these is provided below.

BANA countries

BANA countries were defined by Adrian Holliday (1994) as ‘Britain, Australasia, and North America’. In this study, BANA is used as shorthand for the countries native English-speaking teachers come from.

EFL

EFL refers to the teaching of English-as-a-Foreign-language: teaching English in countries where English is not the native language, for example, South Korea, where Korean is the national language, and Japan, where Japanese is the national language. In Kachru’s (1986, 2005) terminology, these countries are regarded as ‘expanding circle’ countries. English is taught as another subject on the school curriculum in these countries and, while opportunities might exist for private classes, the student is unlikely to hear English spoken outside the classroom.

EFL teacher

EFL teachers are teachers of the English language in expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1986), where English holds no official status, generally countries which were not colonized by the British, where English is, therefore, a foreign language.

ELT

ELT stands for English Language Teaching. This acronym is widely used to refer to teaching both EFL and ESL.

ESL

ESL refers to the teaching of English as-a-Second-Language. This generally means teaching English to learners who live (temporarily, as language students, or

permanently, as migrants or refugees) in an English-speaking country. ESL students are regarded as being immersed in English, hearing it around them all day, while also studying English in class.

NEST

NEST is an acronym used to refer to *Native English-Speaking Teachers*. Though there is controversy about the term ‘native speaker’ in ELT (see [Chapter 2](#) on ‘Native speakerism’), the acronym is still popular in ELT to refer to teachers who come from inner circle (Kachru, 1986) countries. The counterpart to a NEST is an NNEST: a Non-Native-English-speaking teacher, or a LET (Local English Teacher).

Narrative inquiry

The definition of narrative inquiry adopted for this study is based on the work of Clandinin and Connelly (see, for example, Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, Pushor, & Murray Orr, 2007; Connelly & Clandinin, 1986, 1999). Narrative inquiry is a type of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007) in which the focus is on the stories people tell to make sense of their worlds. These stories are analysed holistically for what they reveal about the person’s understanding of their world and what this understanding reveals about the worlds they inhabit (Webster & Mertova, 2007; White, 1981).

1.6 Structure of the thesis

There are six chapters to the thesis. This Introduction outlined the genesis of the thesis, linking the thesis design to preoccupations that arose from the researcher’s life, outlining the conceptual framework of the study, the research questions, and the study’s contribution to knowledge. The chapter shifted between the first and third person – this reflects the mix of first and third person narrative that is used throughout the study. The third person is used to retell the stories told by the teachers who were interviewed, and to refer to the literature. A switch to the first person is made when I, the researcher, talk about my life.

[Chapter 2](#) provides the literature review. It is titled *Walking between worlds*. It outlines what is currently known, and pertinent to this study, about identity, culture, and English language teaching. The chapter begins with a definition of identity and the various facets of identity construction. Culture sections discuss the cultural

differences between the BANA countries teachers come from, and the cultures of South Korea and Japan, where they live and work. A section on English language teaching gives an overview of what is known about English language teachers, then focuses specifically on English language teaching in South Korea and Japan and provides an overview of studies of NES EFL teachers in those countries.

[Chapter 3](#), *Methodology*, follows the literature review. It traces the design of the study, the choice of narrative inquiry as a research method, the decisions made along the way, and the design and analysis choices made in conducting the study. [Chapter 4](#), *Life (hi)stories*, tells the stories of the teachers who participated in this study and discusses the themes that arose in each teacher's story when they talked about their lives and work.

[Chapter 5](#), *Resonances and reflections*, addresses common themes that arose across the teachers' life stories and outlines how these have furthered our knowledge of EFL teaching. It groups shared understandings and viewpoints, while contrasting points of difference between the teachers' stories and experiences. [Chapter 6](#), the concluding chapter, discusses the emerging themes from this study of long-term NES EFL teachers' lives and summarises what was learnt from the study about NES EFL teachers. It adds to what was already known and recommends directions for further study.

I tell my story in interludes between the chapters, called *Reflections*. These outline my journey as interviewer and researcher, reflecting on the teachers' stories, reconfiguring my understanding of events in my life. I discuss pivotal moments that occurred while conducting the study that changed my sense of self and my choices. [Reflection R1: Where are you really from?](#) follows this chapter. [Reflection R2: Conflicted loyalties](#), appears between Chapters [2](#) and [3](#). [Reflection R3: A tale of two interviews](#) appears between Chapters [3](#) and [4](#). [Reflection R4: A letter to John](#) appears between Chapters [4](#) and [5](#), and [Reflection R5: People just like me](#) precedes Chapter [6](#).

Several appendices supplement the thesis. [Appendix A](#) contains the questionnaire. [Appendix B](#) shows the messages sent to promote the questionnaire. This was the means by which teachers were chosen as participants (discussed in more detail in [Chapter 3](#)). A copy of the interview questions is included in [Appendix C](#). [Appendix D](#) has a copy of the interview informed consent form signed by the teachers. [Appendix](#)

[E](#) gives the transcripts of the interviews. The ethical clearance received to conduct the study is included in [Appendix F](#). [Appendix G](#) contains two examples of interview coding, while [Appendix H](#) gives examples of journal entries kept during the thesis writing process. [Appendix I](#) provides Hofstede's value dimension scores for the BANA countries, South Korea and Japan. Finally, [Appendix J](#) gives examples to show how questionnaire and interview data and stories were changed into the narratives that appear in [Chapter 4](#).

Reflection R1: Where are you really from?

In this Reflection I talk about my ongoing struggle with the *Other* to define myself. The way I see myself is very different to the way I am often seen, and this constant questioning of who I am has left me with an aversion to stereotyping others. I trace my own experiences of being stereotyped to discuss how these experiences led me to try and avoid stereotyping the teachers I interviewed for this study.

I have only experienced negative discrimination once, to my knowledge. My friends and I went to a bar in Perth, Western Australia. We weren't let in because I was wearing jeans (they were wearing pants), then we weren't let in a week later because I was wearing pants and they were wearing jeans. We didn't even realize I'd been discriminated against until a few days later, when a policeman friend told us that the bouncers probably thought I was Aboriginal, so it hardly counts.

People love me. They think I'm dusky³ and exotic⁴. They're surprised at how Indians can be so beautiful and so intelligent at the same time⁵. They've always wanted to go to India⁶. They'd love for me to make them a curry⁷. They're always happy for me when my team wins a cricket match⁸ or my people elect a new President (or is it Prime Minister?)⁹. They're so proud of me for learning to speak English with almost no accent, and well enough to be taken for a native speaker¹⁰. They're very apologetic when we go to a restaurant and they realize that there are no vegetarian options, because "in my religion" people don't eat meat¹¹. Very occasionally, they're surprised that my parents let me study, that I wasn't pushed into an arranged marriage at a young age, that I've been 'allowed' to travel – and then they're very

³ A doctoral study I was interviewed for. Somehow he lost the paperwork that said I was from Australia.

⁴ Usually appears as 'dusky, exotic Indian beauty.'

⁵ A White American teacher in Korea whose computer I was fixing. Our other colleagues saved his life by dragging him out of the room quickly.

⁶ Another White American colleague in Korea, but I have heard this several times.

⁷ Some British colleagues I have worked with. Generally White.

⁸ British colleagues.

⁹ Several colleagues, at different times, in different countries. All White.

¹⁰ Not a teacher. A White Australian woman who I met briefly in China. She took no notice of the non-native English-speaking White colleague I was travelling with.

¹¹ Various work colleagues, in different countries. Also friends and acquaintances.

proud of my parents for being so enlightened¹². And, in Korea, where an Indian princess married a Korean king at the dawn of history¹³, I am a cousin to the Korean people, I am family.

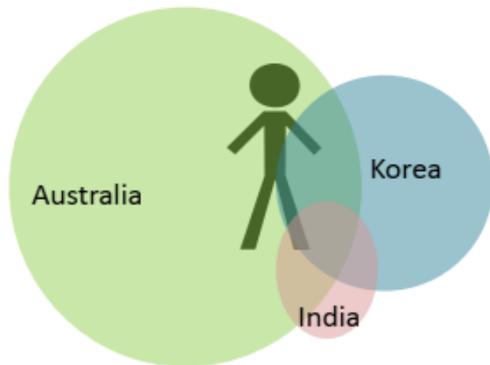


Figure R1.1: The influence of Australia, Korea, and India in how I see myself

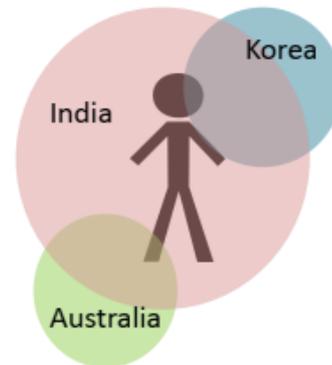


Figure R1.2: The space given to Australia, Korea, and India in how I am often seen

There is a disconnect between the way I see myself (Figure R1.1), and the way others often appear to see me (Figure R1.2). I see myself as predominantly Australian, of Indian descent. My features and skin colour come from India. My knowledge of various culturally-specific religious festivals, and ability to celebrate them, comes from my upbringing in India. But I was an outsider in India, where the confluence of Catholicism, speaking English, living in a Catholic boarding school for six years, and the relative affluence of my parents meant that my siblings and I spent little time in contact with, or interacting with, Indian culture. Australia is home to me. India was a place I occasionally went to to visit my parents, who returned there when they retired. Korea plays a vastly more important part in my life than India, because it was in Korea that I first became aware of cultural differences and how culture shapes identity. My time in Korea equipped me to better understand slight cultural differences between countries that I had previously not noticed. Therefore, in forming my identity, Korea is more important than India, and I think Australia has played the largest role. This is why, when I am stereotyped as Indian by others (Figure R1.2), I feel frustrated and angry. I feel that a large part of my identity is

¹² These comments have come up at random points in conversations with chance-met strangers.

¹³ The myth, story, or legend of Kim Suro and Heo Hwang-ok (Mandhani, 2018).

being denied, in favour of an identity I do not claim and do not wish to claim. In addition, being complimented on having successfully overcome an upbringing I did not have is no compliment.

When I am stereotyped, people don't see *me*, but a stereotypical 'Indian' that lies outside my experience (Brutt-Griffler, 2006). This being is exotic, traditional, conservative, religious (Hindu) and vegetarian, and obedient and/or subservient to her parents. There are no points of contact between this imagined person and me. She speaks English as a second language. Unlike the teachers Weekly (2018) interviewed, unlike multilingual Canagarajah (2012), I have never seen myself, or been able to see myself, as other than a native speaker of English. My family speaks English at home. I speak Spanish and Korean more fluently than I ever spoke Hindi.

I assume that people stereotype with the best of intentions, to create a connection between us and to take (what they consider to be) my feelings into account. However, being stereotyped, and having my identity constantly questioned or challenged, as it is in the interactions described earlier, makes me feel angry and depersonalized. As Siy and Cheryan (2013) found in their study of responses to positive stereotypes, having a social identity imposed on me makes me feel I have lost my individual identity, and I react negatively. Stereotyping patronises the person stereotyped, and disempowers them (Devlin, Ireland, & Equality Authority, 2007). Being placed in a certain category by virtue of my facial features and skin colour makes me feel angry and unable to do anything about it, because of having to be nice to the person who thought they were paying me a compliment (Czopp, Kay, & Cheryan, 2015).

A core part of my identity, therefore, is the tension between who I think I am and how I see myself: the identity I claim (Johnston, 2003), in conflict with who other people think I am, and how I am seen, the identity I am assigned (Johnston, 2003). Having been categorised as 'a dusky exotic Indian beauty' in someone else's doctoral study, I was determined not to repeat the mistake of using a descriptor that the teachers I interviewed were not comfortable with and did not accept as a core part of their identity. Therefore, in both the questionnaire and in the interviews, I asked teachers to describe their ethnic background. Thus, when I wrote up the study, I would be using descriptors that the teachers themselves used to describe themselves. However, when I asked the question in the interviews, six of the eight teachers had

problems answering the question (discussed in [Reflection R5](#), on People just like me).

Chapter 2: Walking between worlds

[Chapter 1](#) outlined the genesis of the study in the researcher's life and set the parameters within which this study was conducted. The aim of the study was to interview *people just like me* (where I defined these people as *long-term native English-speaking (NES) English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teachers who had taught English for at least ten years and taught in at least two different countries*) to build up a holistic picture of the personal and professional lives of long-term NES EFL teachers. The research questions focused on how identity shifted or was shaped by the experience of living in cultures different to the home culture, and how teaching EFL contributed to a NES EFL teacher's sense of self and identity. The questions outlined the themes that will be explored in this chapter: identity, culture, cultural differences and ways of looking at these, and what is known about teacher identity and NES EFL teachers.

This chapter, *Walking between worlds*, begins with the premise that education is not culturally neutral. What is taught, and how it is presented, is determined by national and political agendas (Bruner, 1977; Hardwick, Marcus, & Isaak, 2010). Cultural norms influence how students are taught, and shape expectations of teacher and student roles within the educational context. A native English-speaking teacher (NEST) teaching EFL is a walker between worlds (Figure 2.1): moving from their home culture and country to another country, adapting to a different cultural and/or educational context, negotiating their identity, their relationship with their home country, and their relationship with the country in which they now live (and the countries in which they have lived). They bring personal and cultural baggage from their pasts to the new context. In the new context, they work out how to meet local cultural expectations, and fulfil the educational agenda of the workplace (and/or country). In this chapter, the idea of different worlds, and walking between these, is traced. These different worlds are ideological as well as physical: the countries and cultures the NES EFL teachers in this study come from (the UK, the USA, and Canada) and the countries they work in (South Korea and Japan).

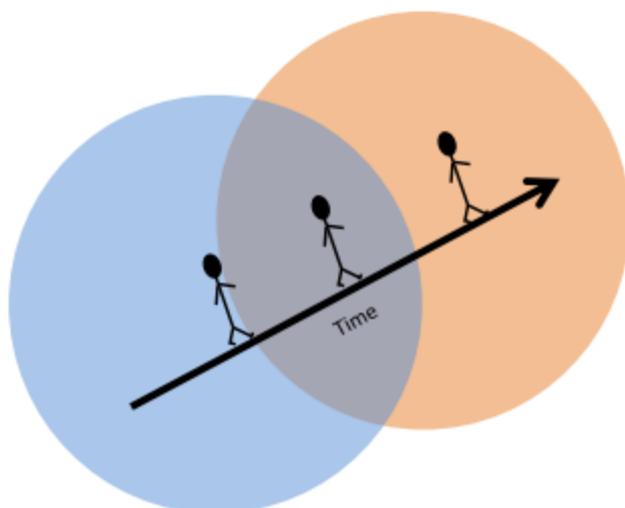


Figure 2.1. Walking between worlds.

The chapter is divided into three sections. NES EFL teacher constructions of self need to be placed in context. These contexts include what is known about identity formation and maintenance; what is held to be true about national and cultural identity in the USA, the UK, Canada, and Australia (the countries the teachers who were interviewed come from, and the country the researcher comes from) and in Japan and South Korea (the countries in which the teachers interviewed worked). Therefore, the first section gives a brief explanation of salient features in identity research, on the influence of culture in identity formation, and on how cultural differences have been explained and categorized. The second section of this chapter focuses specifically on the countries the teachers in this study came from and on South Korea and Japan, where they worked. A brief history of the countries, focusing on how nationhood is construed and promoted internally and externally is followed by a history of English language teaching in Japan and South Korea. The third section of this chapter focuses specifically on what is known about *teacher* identity in general, and, more specifically, about NES EFL teacher identity, discussing the various factors that form and/or modify teacher identity and attitudes toward teaching: such as past experiences and workplaces, teacher emotions, the teacher's relationship with the school, students, and staff. Ideas regarding the native speaker are also discussed in this section.

The chapter plays with the notion of duality. Though people are aware that there are more than two ways to look at the world, and are aware of the range of positions that

can be taken along a continuum – it is easier to divide thoughts into binaries: *Self* and *Other*, Confucian and Socratic, East (Asian) and West (European or English-speaking), monocultural / multicultural, interpersonally-focused / intergroup focused, masculine / feminine, low / high power distance, to name some that are discussed here. Identity is a balance between what an individual thinks, and what others think – of that person, of others, of things and events.

2.1 Identity

There are several salient features to the concept of identity. First of all, it is something that distinguishes a person as different from everyone else, such as through identity documents, but is simultaneously something that identifies a person or thing as the same as others, as part of a group (Pearsall & Trumble, 2003; Ricoeur, 1992). The concept contains its own opposite. Therefore, belonging and group membership form a part of a person's identity, as much as individuality does. That identity is temporal and interactional means that it is neither static nor singular: the identities people choose to take on change, depending on who they are interacting with, and over time, being constantly rewritten, redefined, and renegotiated (Danielewicz, 2001; Hyland, 2012; Riley, 2007). Identities are situational, produced to further personal goals, contextualized to suit the audience (and in interaction with the other participant/s in the interaction), with individuals using the appropriate language to meet situational goals and personal needs (S. Hall, 1996).

This brings up the second salient point with respect to identity: it is forged in the interaction between the labels attached to a person and an individual's sense of self (Ricoeur, 1992), determined in interactions between people, mediated through narrative (Mackenzie, 2008; Ricoeur, 1992). Identity is created and expressed in interactions, thus there is always an *Other* that identity is performed for (Weedon, 2004). Different facets of identity can be differentially expressed in interactions with different people. As such, identity is fluid and ever-changing (S. Hall, 1991). However, even while differentially promoting aspects of self to/with different people, the person continues to see themselves as an unchanging individual. An individual possesses an inner sense of continuity and oneness of self.

Thirdly, identity is defined in interactions with other people, in communication between people (Danielewicz, 2001; S. Hall, 1991; Riley, 2007). Interactions are

predominantly verbal, which means that language plays a crucial part in identity politics (Bakhtin, 1981). Language and identity are inseparable (Joseph, 2004). We define ourselves, and are defined by others, using language. We forge, and break, connections with other people using language (McIntyre-Mills, 2010). Ideas of self are expressed and explored through language (Sekimoto, 2012). At the same time, ideas and definitions can be imposed upon the self by the *Other* (Martin & Nakayama, 2010; Riley, 2007), creating a tension between the identities an individual claims for him/herself, and the identities that are assigned to him/her by others (Johnston, 2003; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). Linguistic interactions form the battleground where different ideologies of self are acted out.

The fourth component of identity formation is time. Time plays a crucial part in the expression of identity. People change over time, and new experiences influence their memories of past events (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; de Ruyter & Conroy, 2002; Riley, 2007). People talking about their lives locate their stories in time, but also collapse time between events to create a linear narrative that makes sense (Schiffrin, 2009). A person's relationship with history – both personal and the history of the group – is not a one way street: events are shuffled into new meanings, so that people remake themselves while remaking history (S. Hall, 1991). Fifthly, individual identity is shaped by national (political) agendas and cultural norms, as will be discussed in the second part of this chapter.

Theories of identity often differentiate between 'identity' and 'the self.' Overall, the literature uses the term 'self' to refer to an interactional, social aspect of a person's identity, affected also by the *Other*, while identity is regarded as a static internal timeless construct (Blustein & Noumair, 1996; Bruner, 2001; O'Connor & Scanlon, 2005). Blustein and Noumair (1996) see identity as the internal eternal construct, and concur with Bruner (2001) in seeing *self* as social and interactional, including the *Other*, and bound by culture and time, not sealed off from the world. O'Connor and Scanlon (2005) use Mead's (1934) separation of self into an active 'Me' and a reflective 'I' to examine the ways in which teachers integrate these to successfully express their personal identity within the demands of their job. In this thesis, 'the self' means the expression of identity, as constructed in the interview and in the questionnaire, and the way in which this identity is narratively constructed by the teacher and interpreted by the researcher. This *self* is culturally embedded, co-created

in the interview process, and re-created/interpreted by the researcher. It is an artefact embedded in time¹⁴. To recap: An individual does not exist in isolation, but in community. Identity is performed and displayed in interactions. Interactions predominantly involve language. While interacting with others, we express who we (think we) are, and how we want to be seen, i.e., we ‘show our true selves.’ In doing so, we modify the past to serve present and/or future needs.

2.2 Social identity

Identity is social, situational and subjective. In speaking with others when we interact with them, we position ourselves (or are positioned) within groups. These labels can be self-imposed, or imposed by others (Padilla & Perez, 2003; Weedon, 2004), and categorise us in terms of our ‘social identity’ (Riley, 2007): the characteristics we share with others. The labels form a shorthand for expressing group membership. Linguistic choices express the sociopolitical positions people take or see themselves as having. The positional identities people take up reflect social structures such as power relationships or belonging within the society (Holland, Lachicotte Jr, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). People (or groups) occupy different positions on the continua. One such continuum is the interpersonal-intergroup one. At the interpersonal end, people relate to each other as individuals, while, at the intergroup end, they relate as members of a group to members of a different group.

Tajfel and Turner (1979) defined social identity as existing on a continuum, with an interpersonal focus at one end of the continuum, and an intergroup focus at the other end. This continuum is loosely linked with that of social mobility and social change. In societies with a lot of social mobility, individuals can move freely between groups, and relations tend toward the interpersonal end of the continuum. Societies towards the social change end of the continuum tend to have stricter stratification between groups, with individuals sharing a group perspective on out-groups. Group membership can be externally imposed (e.g. by occupation) or internally chosen (Tajfel, 1982). In this latter case, individuals join groups that accentuate and bolster features of their own identity, and membership in the group leads to a positive bias

¹⁴ This is shown in Simon’s response, after reading the story that appears as his in [Chapter 4](#). He thanked me for sharing ‘Simon’s story’ – using the pseudonym I had given him, not the pronoun ‘my’, to make overt reference to how he has changed in the intervening time, which distances him from the self that was interviewed.

towards the group, a perception of difference from other groups, and a need to defend the group against perceived attacks, so as to protect the individual's identity (Islam, 2014; Tajfel, 1982).

Social Identity Theory focuses on the development of large group identity, attempting to explain ethnocentrism, conflict and (negatively) discriminatory behaviour between these (Hogg, Abrams, Otten, & Hinkle, 2004). A central aspect of developing a sense of group identity is being able to define what is not part of the group. Some of the large categories that people are categorised within include nationality, ethnicity, and culture, which will be discussed below.

2.3 Culture and cultural identity

As with 'identity,' culture contains conflicting meanings within itself. When we talk about culture, we talk about beliefs, values, and, often, ways of living that we share with other people around us in our home country (Blustein & Noumair, 1996; Eller, 2009). However, 'culture' simultaneously means beliefs, values, and ways of living that other groups of people, often in different countries, share, *that are different to ours* (Minami, 2002). When we talk about culture, therefore, we are either using it to talk about what we share, what links us, or what we don't share, what keeps us apart.

Culture influences behaviour, thought, and the expression of these, through customs and rituals and through the products of that culture (Eller, 2009). Culture is learned (Haviland, Prins, McBride, & Walrath, 2011; Minami, 2002). From birth onwards, culture shapes how a new human being is raised: for example, North American mothers socialize their children into individuality and verbal clarity by allowing their pre-school children to talk for longer, and encouraging the child to describe and give more evaluative feedback on an experience, while Japanese mothers promote empathy and verbal implicitness by facilitating frequent turn-taking, requesting less description, and giving less evaluation (Minami, 2002).

As they grow, individuals are enculturated into the society where they live, a "collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 4). Identity is therefore culturally embedded and *embodied*: identity formation and expression reflects the culture from which the person comes (Blustein & Noumair, 1996). Sharing a cultural background implies neither homogeneity nor exclusivity. Different

co- and sub-cultures usually coexist within each culture, and members of a particular cultural group might share some, but not all of the beliefs and behaviour of that culture (Haviland et al., 2011). To clarify: individual identity is not *determined* by the culture that the person is born into, merely influenced (strongly) by it. Who a person becomes depends on the rigidity with which the community enforces cohesion, the strength of the individual's beliefs, and to what extent they buy in to these shared resources (Cote & Levine, 2002; Kramsch, 1998). Culture, therefore, provides a set of tools, and assigns differential values to different activities or rituals, but the individual, influenced by people he/she interacts with, creates his/her own social identity, and forms their own relationship with that culture.

2.4 Language, identity and culture

Language plays a crucial role in the formation and maintenance of identity (Bakhtin, 1981; Joseph, 2004; Martin & Nakayama, 2010; McIntyre-Mills, 2010; Sekimoto, 2012): identity is built and modified in interactions with other people, with their definitions of one's own self interacting with definitions imposed by others on the *self*. Culture and language are also inextricably bound together. Culture is transmitted by language (Haviland et al., 2011). Language helps us create and transmit meaning, change behaviour, or the values associated with behaviour (Jourdan & Tuite, 2006). Learning a new language is a way of entering into the worldview of the people who speak that language (Saint-Jacques, 2015). At the same time, culture determines how we talk about what we talk about (Minami, 2002).

The language we use changes depending on who we are talking with, to make clear who we are, how we fit in to the group and what role we are playing (Gee, 2008). As such, the language used in particular interactions conveys information about the memberships the speaker claims, the relationship they forge with the other members in the interaction – language is not just words, it is a re-creation of a world of social networks, morals, values, and beliefs. These interactions position the speaker as to the identities they claim through the ways in which they use the language they use (Gee, 2008). In discourse, we position ourselves (or are positioned) within groups. These labels can be self-imposed, or imposed by others (Johnston, 2003; Weedon, 2004), and categorise us in terms of our 'social identity' (Riley, 2007): the characteristics we share with others. The labels form a shorthand for expressing

group membership. Linguistic choices express the sociopolitical positions people take or see themselves as having. The positional identities people take up reflect social structures such as power relationships or belonging within the society (Holland et al., 1998).

2.5 Cultural differences

In talking about culture, we also talk about differences between cultures. Cultural differences affect the ease with which an individual integrates into another culture. If the two cultures are fairly close: for example, Great Britain and the United States, which share a language, and where there is a lot of exchange of ideas, people and trade, subtle differences in beliefs and values might never be noticed if the people involved accept conversations within their own belief systems (Storti, 2001). The assumption is that two people speaking the same language are investing the same meaning in words and phrases.

Discussion of cultural differences comes from the work of cultural anthropologists, philosophers, psychologists, and the world of business, and tends to explain these differences with reference to national positions on a number of continua. From philosophy, we have the configuration of ‘Western’ thought (meaning European culture) based on descent from Socrates, and ‘Eastern’ thought (meaning China, South Korea and Japan) on descent from Confucius (Aoki, 2008; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Ko, Kim Haboush, & Piggott, 2003; Tweed & Lehman, 2002; J. Wang, Wang, Ruona, & Rojewski, 2005). The worlds of psychology, business and anthropology give us continua by Geert Hofstede (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010) such as short- vs long-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance, to name a few, and Edward Hall (E. T. Hall, 1959; E. T. Hall & Hall, 1987), such as monochronic and polychronic time, and high and low context cultures, to explain the differences in thought between these cultures. Richard Nisbett (2003), a psychologist, talks of a holistic, circular-historied ‘East’ and a linear ‘West’. In Western societies, the self is figured as independent and individual, unconnected, while non-Western societies, focused on connection, focus on an interdependent, socially-connected, flexible self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). It is generally held that the cultures of east Asia (China, Korea, Japan) place a

higher value on conformity and the group than on individuality (Hoffman, 1993; Hofstede et al., 2010; Y. Kim, Kasser, & Lee, 2003).

2.6 Categorising countries using cultural differences

The most popular explanations of differences between cultures focus on the distance between the values shared by nationals of one country and those of another. These explanations focus on the national level – they are not meant to be used to categorise individuals, and they subsume co- and sub-cultures within a society within the same national label. These differences are outlined below because they summarize the themes that are commonly used to discuss cultures.

2.6.1 Confucius and Socrates

Confucius and Socrates were near contemporaries, Confucius being born in China about 80 years before Socrates was born in Greece (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Tweed & Lehman, 2002). Both had a huge influence on ways of thinking about the world, in the East and in the West, respectively. Confucius, in the East, held that education was necessary to help an individual become a productive member of society. To Socrates, the purpose of education was to question, in a journey towards truth.

Socratic thought is held to be the basis for the cultures of the English-speaking societies of Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Socratic thought emphasized learning through questioning. The teacher and the student are both seekers after truth, which exists outside them and can be arrived at through questioning and debate (Aoki, 2008). Through questioning, and exposing errors in reasoning, the learner approaches the truth. The teacher's job is to ask the right questions to enable the learner to approach knowledge, to evaluate the validity of this knowledge, and to approach knowledge, not merely true belief (Tweed & Lehman, 2002).

In Figure 2.2, the Socratic model of learning is depicted as the apple of knowledge being pierced by the teacher and students' questions. Knowledge is infinitely greater than the sum of the knowledge the teacher and students can acquire through their questions. The students and the teacher are on the journey towards truth together, and therefore face the same direction.

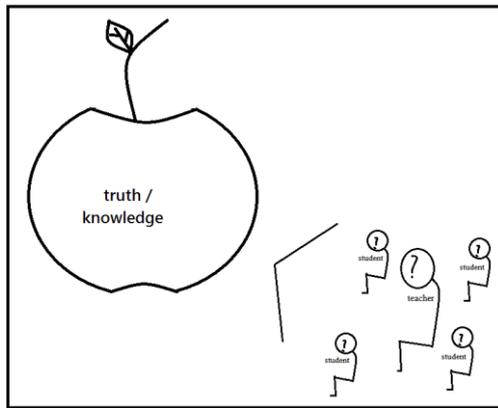


Figure 2.2. Socratic model of learning.

In contrast to Socrates, to Confucius, learning needed to have a pragmatic purpose (Tweed & Lehman, 2002)¹⁵. The purpose of education was to become an ideal member of society (Chen & Chung, 1993). Learners should make an effort to learn, build understanding of the (essential) knowledge imparted to them, be respectful to their teachers, and learn the right way to behave in society (Tweed & Lehman, 2002). Society was built on unequal relationships, each role requiring certain obligations. Both the senior and the junior partner had roles and responsibilities. For example, one such relationship pair in modern Korean society is that of superior and subordinate, where the superior owes a duty of care to the subordinate, and the subordinate owes the superior obedience (Hofstede et al., 2010; J.-K. Lee, 2001; J. Wang et al., 2005). This, it is said, translates, in the classroom, to students who expect that the teacher will teach, and that the students will follow their teachers' instructions without criticism (S.-A. Han, 2005a; J.-K. Lee, 2001).

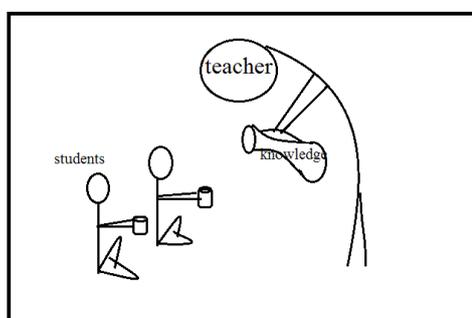


Figure 2.3. Confucian model of learning.

¹⁵ Note that Li (2003) disagrees with Tweed and Lehman (2002), stating that they ignored Confucius' moral aspect to learning, where it is the learner's moral imperative to become the best possible person he can, in order to contribute more productively to society.

In Figure 2.3, the Confucian model of learning is depicted as the teacher, the seer, carrying the vessel of knowledge, which he pours into the students' minds (depicted as cups). Knowledge is finite, and knowable only through what the teacher chooses to share. The whole scene appears in a box, which depicts society – learning, in Confucian terms, being necessary to create an ideal member of society. The differing sizes of the teacher and student, and of the vessels, illustrate the inherent power discrepancy between the two, a feature inherent in the Confucian model. Thus, in cultures influenced by Socratic forms of thought, the teacher and student are more equal, both in search of truth, while in Confucian forms of thought, the teacher is the font of knowledge, and the student the recipient of this knowledge. In Figure 2.4, the positions the countries the NES EFL teachers in this study came from, and the positions the countries they worked in are depicted, on a Socratic-Confucian continuum of learning and knowledge. This continuum is based on my understanding of the place given to these nations in the work of Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), Sheridan (1999), and Ko, Kim Haboush, and Piggott (2003).

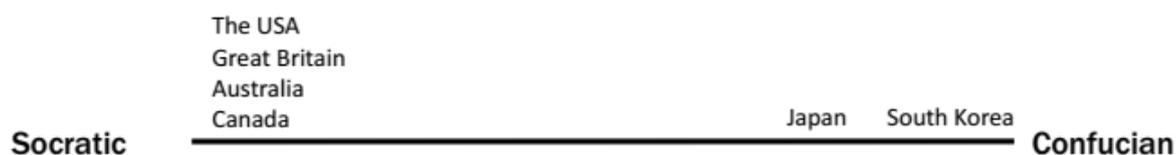


Figure 2.4. Historically constructed approach to learning and knowledge.

2.6.2 Geert Hofstede on differences between cultures

Geert Hofstede's value dimensions (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Hofstede et al., 2010) are by far the most used and quoted in the field of business (Nakata, 2009; Pusch, 2009). The social psychologist / anthropologist Geert Hofstede developed the Hofstede value dimensions based on surveys conducted with employees of IBM worldwide in the 1960s and 1970s. There are currently six value dimensions: the original four, which are masculinity/femininity, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism/collectivism, plus long-term orientation (added in the 1980s; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005), and indulgence/restraint (first reported in Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010). Hofstede has explained that these reflect different national tendencies. Though Hofstede's framework has been criticized for being Eurocentric (Martin & Nakayama, 2010), generalizing from small groups to national trends (Saint-Jacques, 2015), and for erroneously assuming that the cultural

stability of the time when the study was conducted would continue (Saint-Jacques, 2015; Taras & Steel, 2009), it is generally agreed that these continua are essential for understanding differences between cultures (Pusch, 2009).

In Figure 2.5 below, national scores on the various criteria, for Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Japan, South Korea and the USA have been graphed. It shows that Australia, Canada, Great Britain and the USA (henceforth ‘BANA’¹⁶) tend to be grouped together in almost all categories, while Japan and South Korea are almost always (except scores in the masculinity/femininity dimension) together, and, simultaneously, poles apart from the BANA countries. Thus, on almost every continuum, the BANA countries differ greatly in orientation to Japan and South Korea.

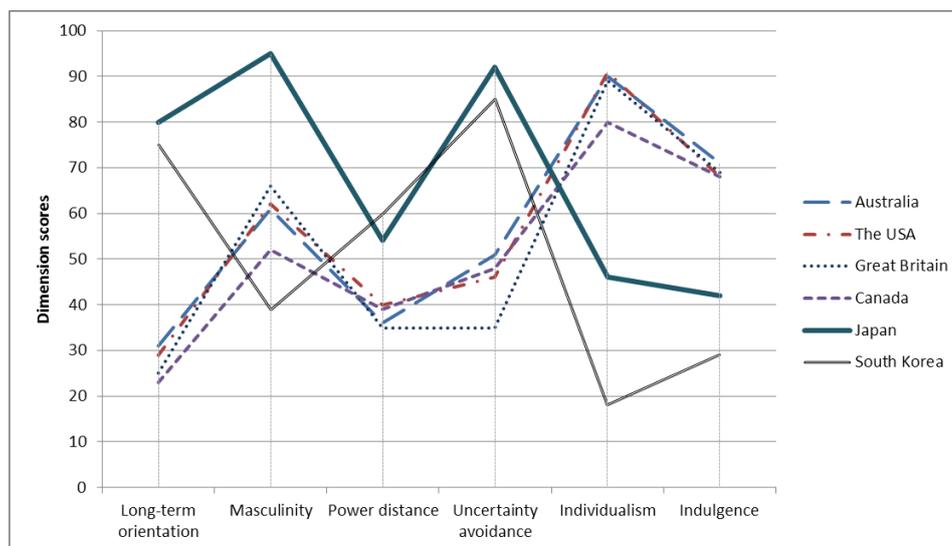


Figure 2.5. Graph of Hofstede’s value dimension scores for BANA countries, South Korea, and Japan (based on scores in Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) and Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010)¹⁷.)

What do these criteria mean? Short or *long-term orientation*, added in the early 1990s, ranks countries on whether they focus on immediate rewards, individual rights, and thinking for oneself (short-term orientation), or whether they focus on working toward the same goals, building personal networks, and perseverance (long-term orientation). Long term orientation means planning for the future. In countries with high long term orientation, such as Korea and Japan, people focus on having the

¹⁶ BANA refers to ‘Britain, Australasia and North America’ (Adrian Holliday, 1994). A more detailed explanation is given in section 2.8.1 of this chapter.

¹⁷ The scores, in table format, can be seen in [Appendix I](#).

same goals, on forming personal networks, and on synthetic thinking. People from countries with short-term orientation, such as Australia, the USA, Great Britain and Canada, focus on freedom, individual rights, thinking for oneself, and having leisure time, and think analytically.

Masculinity - masculine values are considered to be the desire for greater earnings, recognition, advancement and challenge at work, while feminine values are considered to be cooperation, employment security, good working relationships with supervisors, and a better quality of life (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Countries with a low score on this scale (South Korea) show more feminine values, while countries with a high score (Japan) prioritised strict(er) gender roles, and more rigidly segregated the genders, and acceptable behaviour for each gender, and penalised digressions from these.

Power distance is a measure of dependence and independence between employees and employer. Japan and Korea showed a larger power distance, meaning that inequalities between people are expected, children learn to obey their elders, and age is respected. In the workplace, superiors make decisions and subordinates follow rules.

The fourth value on the Hofstede scale is *uncertainty avoidance*, which refers to “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations” (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 167). Strong uncertainty avoidance cultures, such as South Korea and Japan, generally show fewer changes of employer, more workplace rules, and more ethnic prejudice or xenophobia.

Individualism-collectivism is a measure of which interests prevail in a society: the individual, or the collective. In societies with a low score, such as South Korea and, to an extent, Japan, the interests of the group predominate over the interests of the individual. In terms of behaviour, harmony is more important than honesty, the importance given to personal relationships means that hiring might depend on who one knows or is connected with, rather than on personal merit. The purpose of education is learning how to do, not how to learn.

Indulgence-restraint, added in the 2010 edition of the book (Hofstede et al., 2010), focuses on happiness, the ability to live one’s life as one chooses, and the prioritization of leisure among individuals. The BANA countries rank higher on

indulgence, while Japan and South Korea cluster together amongst restraint-predominant societies, where social norms control the gratification of life enjoyment desires.

2.6.3 Edward T Hall on time and context

The anthropologist Edward T. Hall categorized differences between cultures in terms of time: whether the societies were polychronic or monochronic, whether they were past- or future-oriented, and whether they were high- or low-context. Monochronic cultures, such as the USA and other Western countries, value time. Time is an arrow, running linearly from past to present to future, heading towards a goal (Y. Y. Kim, 2015b). People stick to schedules, and break times are rigidly upheld, even over interpersonal relations. In polychronic cultures such as Japan, where time and existence are seen as cyclical (a wheel instead of an arrow) (Y. Y. Kim, 2015b), interpersonal relationships are prioritised over time. Many tasks are handled simultaneously, appointment times are flexible, and people are willing to cut into personal time to handle interpersonal matters (E. T. Hall, 1959; E. T. Hall & Hall, 1987).

High and low context cultures come into conflict when many people from low context cultures, such as the USA, feel that they have not been given enough information, while people from high context cultures, such as Japan, tend not to understand why they are being given unnecessary information (E. T. Hall & Hall, 1987). Speakers in the high context cultures of the East rely on the listener's knowledge of their shared context to help them understand what is being alluded to, while speakers in the low context Western cultures convey information explicitly, to ensure that the listener understands the context (Y. Y. Kim, 2015b).

2.6.4 Richard Nisbett on East and West

Nisbett (2003), arguing for a cyclical view of history in the Confucian-, Buddhist and Tao-inspired East, and a linear view of history in the Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates inspired West, looked at the mental differences these would generate. Easterners would focus more on relationships, a global picture of the situation, and a more balanced view of situations, while Westerners would focus on controlling the environment, the small picture (objects, rather than the environment), and logic to understand events. Children are socialized to be independent (West) or

interdependent (East), to communicate clearly (West), or to listen carefully to understand the underlying message (East). However, when living in the other culture for a period of time, the individual learns to behave as others in that culture do (i.e., an independent Western person living for a long time in JSK would begin to think and act in interdependent ways, and vice versa).

We have seen that, on almost all the systems developed to explain differences between cultures, South Korea and Japan lie close together, and apart from the BANA countries, with these latter countries also lying close to each other on the continua. Each of the continua is posited to operate on a national level, not on an individual level, and are useful to examine broad differences between cultures. When it comes to looking at an individual's experience in interacting with different cultures, we start talking about intercultural competence.

2.7 Acculturation and intercultural competence

With globalization, people are more likely than ever before to come into contact with people from cultures different to their own (Saint-Jacques, 2015). When people migrate to another nation, they may come into contact with new ways of looking at the world, and different beliefs. The process of adaptation to *another* culture is called acculturation (Berry, 1997) – as opposed to *enculturation* which is what socialization into the cultural norms of the society you were born into is called. People develop intercultural competence when they learn to understand how people in another culture think, become aware of how people in their own culture think, and learn to negotiate between these different points of view (Saint-Jacques, 2015).

Sociocultural factors, such as the prestige of the native culture and language of the immigrant, play an important role in the process of acculturation, with small immigrant groups more likely to be regarded favourably, and thought of as exotic, while a large influx of immigrants from a particular group is more likely to be regarded unfavourably, and seen as subordinate to the dominant cultural group (Watkins-Goffman, 2001).

When people from different cultures come into contact, misunderstandings can arise because the same situation is interpreted differently through different cultural lenses (Su, 1993). These can affect interactions in the classroom, between the teacher and the students, in the teaching workplace, in interactions between native speaker and

non-native speaker teachers, and between native speaker teachers and the administrative staff, and in interactions in daily life, for example, with shopkeepers, with banks and other institutions. Cultural differences in expectations of student and teacher behaviour in the classroom can lead to culture shock in the classroom among non-native English-speaking teachers and learners (Babcock, 1993; Youn, 2000). Different people, in contact with the same culture, or the same person at different times, with different cultures, make different accommodations – to assimilate, to remain marginalised, to attempt to integrate into the culture, or to separate oneself from it (Erez & Gati, 2004; Robertson, Gaggiotti, & Low, 2007). Alptekin and Alptekin (1984) talk about several tensions in the construction of native speaker (NS) teacher identity in a non-English-speaking land: the belief that language and culture are inextricably intertwined, the uneasy relationship between the (often) monolingual, monocultural NEST and the culture they work in, where teachers often choose not to learn about the new culture, and retreat to English enclaves, while attempting to teach patterns of thought and belief from their own culture in the language classroom.

Psychological acculturation looks at how the individual adapts to living in another culture (Berry, 1997). Culture shock arises when people who have grown up in one culture, enculturated in it, move to a different place and face differences in ways of thinking, seeing the world, and behaving. The individuals work out their positions on two scales: cultural maintenance (to what extent they want to maintain their home cultural identity) and contact and participation (to what extent they want to merge or relate to the culture they now live in) (Berry, 1997). In answering these two questions, the person chooses whether to integrate (maintain their own identity and also forge connections within the new society), assimilate (give up their cultural identity in order to maintain relationships within the society they now live in), separate (give preference to the maintenance of their own cultural identity, over forming relationships within the new culture), or become marginalized (give up their own cultural identity, but still not form relationships within the new culture) (Berry, 1997; Matsumoto, LeRoux, & Yoo, 2005). Berry's acculturation strategies are presented in Figure 2.6.

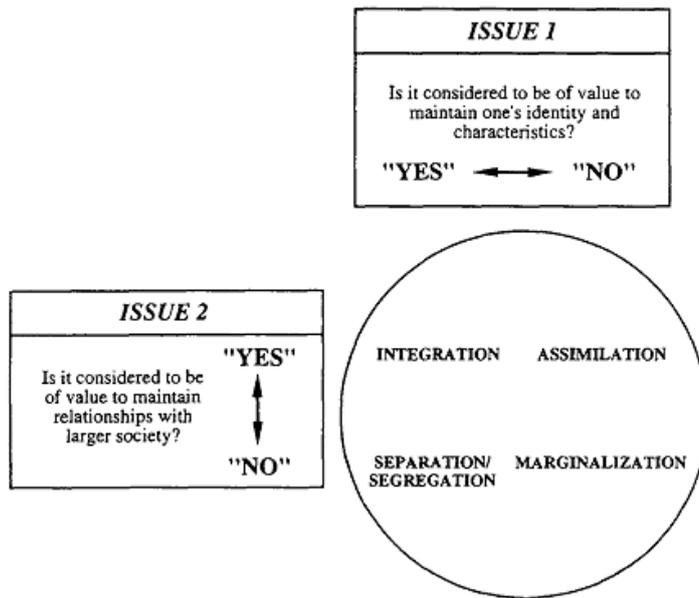


Figure 2.6: Acculturation strategies (Berry, 1997, p. 10).

People adapt to different cultures at different rates. Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004) posits the adaptation to cultural difference as a six stage process: from the ethnocentric (denial, defense, minimization), where the home culture is central, to ethnorelative (acceptance, adaptation, integration), where the individual begins to relate behaviour to the cultural context in which it occurs, rather than to their own cultural context, and sees their own cultural context as 'just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities' (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). If an individual moves from ethnocentric to ethnorelative perceptions of culture, they start to integrate tolerance or acceptance of cultural difference into their own identity.

This adaptation is mediated by their willingness to learn the language, learn about the culture, and try to fit in; the knowledge they gain from interacting with locals - both about the culture they are in, and about themselves and their own culture; and environmental factors such as the willingness of the host culture to accept them, the degree to which the new immigrant is expected to conform to cultural norms, and the size of the group and its status within the other society (Y. Y. Kim, 2015a). Personal factors and the individual's internal resources also play a role in determining the success of intercultural competence: how prepared the individual is to move to the new country, how voluntary the move is, and the length of time they plan to stay;

their own personality and willingness to adapt, their inner strength, their positivity and ability to learn from problematic situations (Y. Y. Kim, 2015a).

Identity is a two way street: if the identity, and the home, we try to claim is not accepted by others in the in group, the person remains an outsider. Individuals living in other countries might see the new country as home, but this claim must be accepted by the people among whom they live (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011).

To summarise, when people move to another country, they go through a range of feelings as they adjust to differences in behaviour, thought, and action, from those they were accustomed to (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). These feelings can cause changes in their perception of culture, moving them from ethnocentric to ethnorelativistic (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). Adaptation is not as straightforward as an individual adapting to a new context: if the *Other*, the people in the country, do not accept the individual's claim of belonging, the individual remains an outsider, unaccepted, in the country in which they live (Y. Y. Kim, 2015a; Ralph & Staeheli, 2011)

2.8 Nations and national identity: some definitions

Individuals' perceptions of their personal and professional identities consist of a complex confluence of social and cultural norms. A key feature of those norms is national identity (B. Anderson, 2006; Henderson & McEwen, 2009; Rosman et al., 2009). National identity is a construct created via the use of myths, the selective promotion of certain historical events, and the use of symbols to forge a sense of in-group membership between people who live in a particular place (Rosman et al., 2009).

Nations are human constructions, *ideational constructs* laid over a bounded part of the earth, to separate one group of people from another (Eller, 2009; Hofstede et al., 2010). A nation is an "imagined community" (B. Anderson, 2006, p. 5) that is politically created and sustained. The *nation* is a recent development, with foundations in the 18th century (Coffin, Stacey, Cole, & Symes, 2011), but coming fully into being in the mid-20th century (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Seelye & Wasilewski, 1996). In order to bind people together (Henderson & McEwen, 2009; Schmid, 2001; Slatta, 2010), the nation uses education (Bukh, 2007; Wineburg & Monte-sano, 2008), shared holidays (Hayday, 2010; Macnamara & Crawford, 2013),

and myths (Asari et al., 2008; Slatta, 2010; Smith, 2012; Swann, 2003) to forge a national identity. A common history is created, and the history and myths of nationhood, of having a shared culture, are taught in school (Bukh, 2007). The school curriculum determines what is talked about, and how, and, more importantly, what is *not* talked about. Students not only learn what is considered important for them to learn, they also learn what is permitted and not permitted to talk about, from teachers, peers, and their parents (Milner IV, 2010). Nationhood requires two conditions: shared memories, and a will to remain a nation (Renan, 1990).

National identity does not always equate with cultural grouping: nations can create a common culture by choosing a national language, homogenizing education, and the political system within the nation (Hofstede et al., 2010): different groups can band together to form multinational states and to forge a shared identity (Henderson & McEwen, 2009), or the same cultural group can be separated by national boundaries (R. D. Lewis, 2006). People are educated, entertained, and indoctrinated into feeling a sense of belonging into one group and not another, through invoking shared values separating ‘us’ from ‘them,’ and, more importantly, invoking a national identity. People differ in the degree to which they invest into this shared national identity: from each other, but also within themselves, over time. When people move to another nation, they think in stereotypes and myths. These are, for the most part, fostered by the nation. In multinational states, shared values are invoked not only at the national but also at state levels, to nurture the ideas of difference-from-the-other and belonging (Henderson & McEwen, 2009). As with personal identity, national identity is ever-evolving. The past is not static: interpretations of past events are modified to suit present needs, and in the pursuit of a shared future (Ariely, 2012). Examining the mythos around a nation tells us how the nation wishes to be seen, and how they are seen.

This study of NES EFL teachers focuses on teachers from Britain, Canada and the USA (here referred to as the ‘BANA’ countries – an explanation follows) working in South Korea or Japan (shortened to JSK in talking about both countries). On every continua that we use to look at the USA, the UK, Canada and Australia, on the one hand, and South Korea and Japan, on the other, the countries appear at different ends of various continua. In the following sections, the similarities between the BANA

countries, and shared cultural underpinnings of South Korea and Japan are explored, along the various continua.

2.8.1 The BANA countries

The acronym 'BANA', standing for Britain, Australasia, and North America, was coined by Adrian Holliday in a 1994 article discussing the differences between English language teaching in these predominantly English-speaking countries, and contrasting it with English language teaching in the rest of the world (A. Holliday, 1994). BANA is used here as a quick way of referring to the countries that 'native speaker' English language teachers come from, in the perception of countries like Japan and South Korea, where English is taught as a foreign language. South Korea is very specific about who is a native speaker of English: E2 English teaching visas are only granted to people from the UK, the USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland, who have a Bachelor's degree in any subject (DeChamplain, 2017; S.-A. Han, 2005b; Joun, 2015; Korea Immigration Service Ministry of Justice, 2011).

Former colonies of Great Britain, Australia, Canada and the USA share several myths. All three have native populations that were displaced and decimated by white settlement, and all have experienced problems resolving the issue of national identity with regards to the native populations (Fleras, 2017; R. E. Howard, 1998; Maddison, 2012). The three countries see themselves as nations of immigrants, and a large part of the rhetoric of nation building is centred on the descendants of white settlers, and later acceptance of waves of migration from other parts of the world, with a problematic integration of original populations into these narratives (Fleras (2017), on Australia and Canada, Lewis (2012) on the USA). More recently, all three have focused on migration and multiculturalism as a foundation for their societies.

Both Australia and Canada are commonwealth countries, with the same head of state: the queen of England. Governmental and political systems are broadly similar, both countries are fairly wealthy, considered part of the first world, and with a high standard of living (Fleras, 2017). In both countries, perceptions of national identity and citizenship shifted focus to become more inclusive and multicultural in the 1960s and 1970s (Galligan, 2017; Hjerm, 1998; Mann, 2013, 2017).

Canadian identity is rooted in multiculturalism – Moodley and Adam (2012) point out that Canada and Australia are the only two Western nations “where multiculturalism remains official policy” (p.425) - and on a national ownership of shared values. These values include compromise, being low key, moderate, tolerant, egalitarian, fair and just, and socially responsible, *not* being overtly patriotic and *not* being American (Hayday, 2010; Henderson & McEwen, 2009; R. E. Howard, 1998).

Australian identity has traditionally been rooted in the outdoors: a life of sports and leisure, and on the idea of mateship and egalitarianism (a fair go). But this focus has broadened to include the idea of diversity and difference among Australians, and respect for these, of freedom of choice, and of living in a safe nation with a high standard of living (Moran, 2011; Purdie & Wilss, 2007). Personal characteristics form a part of national identity, with Australians seeing themselves as ‘open-minded, optimistic, honest, decent, down to earth, and friendly’ (Purdie & Craven, 2006), relaxed and laid back (S. Howard & Gill, 2001), with a good sense of humour and an enjoyment of life.

Unlike the discussions of Australian and Canadian national identity, which broadly focus on a nationally-shared, developing, and integrative idea of what constitutes national identity, writing on American national identity focuses on the polarization of constructions of this identity. Manifest Destiny, the idea of the US being superior, exceptional, blessed by God, and unique, has permeated American national rhetoric since its founding (Heiss, 2002). Tierney (2016) sees national identity, from the formation of the United States, as focused on the *Other*, the enemy, uniting the nation under stricter governmental control in periods of threat (the threats being either a diminished global standing, or an internal diversity of ideals), and leading to increasing diversity of belief and behaviour in times of safety, and traces this expanding-contracting design down through American history. The times of threat are necessary to sustain the myth of political exceptionalism – of a nation under God’s special protection (Brewer, 2011). As the US has grown in political power, it has also become the world’s policeman, trying to ensure that other countries are remade in its image (Heiss, 2002). Lewis (2012) sees the same pattern of expansion into liberal ideas, and contraction into conservative ones in the constitutional narratives regarding race, multiculturalism, and gender issues in the USA. Glenister Roberts (2011) extends the same discussion of American politics into its polarizing

effect on the media. Straughn and Feld (2010) show that this division extends to religion, between those who define themselves as ‘true’ Americans and equate this with Christianity, and those who do not belong to the religious majority and see tolerance for a diversity of opinions as a cornerstone of American identity.

The term ‘British’ was used self-referentially by the settlers who moved from Britain to the United States, Australia, and Canada, reaching peak strength from the 1880s to the 1950s (Bridge & Fedorowich, 2003). While the former colonies focused on developing national identities, the British, still blinded by ties to the nations of the Commonwealth, and affected by the end of the Empire and subsequent revaluing of imperial history, have not focused strongly on identifying what makes up British national identity (Bridge & Fedorowich, 2003). As such, there is no strong formation of national identity in Britain (Asari et al., 2008; Maylor, 2010). To many (White) British, Britishness, being English, or being White are interchangeable terms (Bond & Rosie, 2010; Maylor, 2010; Rydzewska, 2009), and British identity no longer means much because of the influx of migrants colouring Britain (Maylor, 2010). Ideals that make up British culture include liberty, fairness, and social responsibility (Bechhofer & McCrone, 2007), but the weight of British history makes it difficult for the British to weave these into a strong national identity (Asari et al., 2008).

This brief overview of the history of the English-speaking BANA countries reveals that there are more similarities than differences between the four countries. First of all, each of the four countries sees themselves as multicultural. Secondly, national identity is configured around the possession of various universal ideals such as egalitarianism, liberty, social responsibility, fairness. Thirdly, despite their avowed multiculturalism, each of the countries has a problematic relationship with non-White immigrants or with the original inhabitants of the land (in the case of the colonized countries). Fourth, nationals of all four countries are said to have a fairly high standard of living. I now turn to Japan and South Korea, countries that pride themselves on their homogeneity and on being monocultural.

2.8.2 Japan

Ideas spreading from Europe and the US to Japan in the early nineteenth century led to the subsuming of the Ainu people and the Ryukyu kingdom into the conception of mono-ethnic nation that Japan has tried to hold on to ever since (Morris-Suzuki,

1998). However, this “image of Japan ... as a homogenous nation with a unique culture, a single language, and a nearly universal middle class never reflected social reality” (Bestor, Bestor, & Yamagata, 2011, p. 4). English did not gain a foothold in insular, isolationist Japan until 1853, with the arrival of an American ship with orders to open up trade with the Japanese nation (Kubota, 1998; McKenzie, 2010). While there was a backlash to English, it was still taught in middle schools in the country, losing popularity briefly during the Second World War, only to return strongly after the war.

In the rigidly hierarchical ordering of nations in the Japanese mind, European and other White cultures come first, followed by Japan, followed by other Asian countries (Rivers & Ross, 2013; Rogers, Hart, & Miike, 2002). The ‘native speaker’ of English, idealized as a white person, is both valued for their whiteness, and discriminated against in the workplace for their foreignness (Kubota & McKay, 2009; Rivers & Ross, 2013). Kubota (1998) claims that the schizophrenia in the attitudes towards NESTs stems from a schizophrenic duality within Japanese culture: the historical tendency of the Japanese to valorize English-speaking Western culture, plus the ideology of internationalization (*kokusaika*) leading to a desire to learn English, but the competing forces of Japanese nationalism and uniqueness (*nihonjinron*), xenophobia, and a reaction to unsuccessful language learning attempts prejudicing Japanese against the language and its speakers. Thus, a national desire for English education goes hand-in-hand with the forging of an insular ‘Japanese’ identity (Kobayashi, 2011).

Modern day Japan is grappling with multiculturalism as well as with the need to recognise the ethnic and linguistic minorities that have been unwillingly coopted into the narrative of homogeneity Japan has held for over a hundred years. Researchers writing on Japan see Japanese nationalism strongly linked to English education (Bouchard, 2017; Hagerman, 2009; Kubota, 2015), where learning English is associated with patriotism and the promotion of the country on a world stage.

2.8.3 South Korea

Korea is held to be the most Confucian of the east Asian countries (Sheridan, 1999), with Confucian values, such as respect for elders and for education forming a strong part of the Korean mindset (Hoffman, 1993). Knowing one’s place in the hierarchy is

enshrined in the Korean language, where people change verb and noun suffixes when speaking, depending on the hierarchical position of the person they are speaking to (Bleiker, 2001). Claiming a common origin (Hoffman, 1993), and a 5000 year shared history (M. Oh, 2009), interrupted by the war between the Koreas (Bleiker, 2001), Korean national identity was forged around an idea of racial purity and of superiority gone unrecognized by the rest of the world (Hoffman, 1993).

This collective, ethnically homogenous identity was forged in order to survive Japanese imperialism (1910-1945) (Y. Lee, 2009). In this shared ethnicity, ‘we’ (*uri*) is prioritized over ‘I’ (Y. Lee, 2009). *Uri* sustains “a notion of self as socially constituted and embedded” (Hoffman, 1993, p. 13), creating a strong, emotionally bonded in-group, and a definite out-group (Japan, North Korea, foreigners) to contrast with the former.

This sense of a collectivist identity has been seen several times in recent South Korean history, such as when Koreans responded to the financial crisis by donating their gold jewellery at the government’s request (Anand & Richardson, 2003); when Korean women donated eggs for stem cell research by (the now discredited) Professor Hwang (Gottweis & Kim, 2010), and in the national pride, and later, shame, felt in his achievements (Chekar & Kitzinger, 2007); in the Korean government’s apology to the US government and people when the Virginia Tech school shooting in 2007 was carried out by a Korean who had migrated to the US at the age of 8 (Veale, 2007); and in the way the government has made the Korean wave (*hallyu*) – the growing popularity of Korean pop music, TV series, and movies in Asia and in other parts of the world - part of the national tourism marketing strategy for Korea (Joo, 2011; J. Kim, 2007).

Once Korea opened up to the world, in the late 19th century, Koreans started migrating to other countries. However, since the late 1980s onwards, more foreigners have immigrated to Korea than Koreans have emigrated (J.-E. Oh et al., 2011). With a growing pool of migrant workers and migrant brides, Korean perceptions of national identity are moving from *jus sanguinis* ‘toward citizenship-based Korean-ness’ (Y. Lee, 2009, p. 378), with some groups being assimilated, while others are kept separate and celebrated as diversity and multiculturalism-in-action (Iain Watson, 2012; Ian Watson, 2012).

2.9 Ethnicity

Ethnic 1a (of a social group) having a common national or cultural tradition. *b* (of clothes, music, etc.) influenced by the traditions of a particular people or culture, esp. a non-European one regarded as exotic. **2** denoting origin by birth or descent rather than nationality (ethnic Turks) **3** relating to race or culture (ethnic group: ethnic origins) (Pearsall & Trumble, 2003, p. 481)

Ethnicity is a recent term, dating to the 1960s, and is a term predominantly used by English-speaking countries (Brutt-Griffler, 2006). It either *signifies* race (as in the USA), or *subsumes* race within itself (as in other English-speaking countries) (Brutt-Griffler, 2006). Brutt-Griffler argues that in the US, ethnicity is reduced to colours (White, Black) and other categories (Hispanic American, Asian American, African American) that give a racial underpinning to these while simultaneously ignoring the various countries the people thus categorised might fall under (e.g., Black could include African American, Nigerian, Jamaican), while in other English-speaking countries, ‘ethnic’ categories include East Asian. The concept of ethnicity creates a myth of common ancestry, links ancestry and culture, and then imposes boundaries on individuals by assuming that their ethnic identity circumscribes their behaviour. As such, ethnicity is often socially imposed, ignoring the lived experience of the individual (Brutt-Griffler, 2006).

Another salient feature of ethnic studies is the study of Whiteness. Whites assume that they have no racial identity – they are the unmarked norm (Weedon, 2004). People of colour are raised to see themselves through the eyes of the dominant social group – Whites. This leads to the development of a kind of double consciousness (Du Bois, 1903; Scheurich, 1993), being always aware of how they are seen. The dictionary definition above (Pearsall & Trumble, 2003) illustrates the ways in which ethnicity, nationality, race, and culture are intertwined: (1) the ancestry myth – that the group has a common cultural or national tradition; (2) the assumption that ethnicity is something that *others* (generally non-White races) have; and (3) the conflation of race and culture.

The focus on multiculturalism in the BANA countries leads to a particular focus on ethnic background as a marker of multiculturalism. However, this also serves to set a

boundary between groups of people and does not take into account the ways in which successive generations assimilate into the country to which their ancestors moved (Canagarajah, 2006).

2.10 EFL teaching, South Korea and Japan

South Korea and Japan are both countries that are in the ‘expanding circle’ (Graddol, 2006): countries where English is taught as a foreign language. ‘Native’ English speakers (regarded as people originating from the BANA countries: the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa; see www.epik.go.kr; Olsen, 2018) are in high demand, to teach English in local schools, private educational institutions, and universities. The Korean Institute of Statistics, which tracks the number of non-Koreans in the country, shows that, in 2011, 36,793 people from the USA, UK, Canada, and Australia entered the country on E2 (one year, renewable) teaching visas (Korea Immigration Service Ministry of Justice, 2011) (Table 2.1). The ‘E2’ visa category indicates a foreign language instructor¹⁸. The ‘E’ visa categories indicate highly skilled manpower: ‘highly skilled’ for language instructors meaning a university degree, which enables them to come into Korea to teach (Park, 2013). Statistics from Japan are not divided by visa category, only by nationality, but these show that 83,961 people from the United States, Canada, the UK, and Australia lived in Japan in 2011 (Ministry of Justice, 2014) (Table 2.1). (As the statistics for Japan are not divided according to occupation, it is impossible to tell what percentage of these totals were English language teachers, students studying in Japan, foreigners married to Japanese nationals, or business migrants.) Statistics from 2011 are given because the interviews for this study were conducted in that year.

Table 2.1: Foreigners from the USA, UK, Canada and Australia who entered Korea (on E2 visas) or Japan in 2011

Country of origin	Entered South Korea on E2 visas (2011)	Legal residents in Japan (2011)
USA	22,647	49,815
Canada	8,571	9,484
United Kingdom	4,689	15,496

¹⁸ Some foreign language instructors might have been teaching in Korea on F1 or F2 (immigrant) visas, because they are married to Korean citizens – however, as it is impossible to distinguish the language teachers from those immigrants working in other categories, only the E2 visa holders were counted.

Country of origin	Entered South Korea on E2 visas (2011)	Legal residents in Japan (2011)
Australia	886	9,166

2.10.1 English language teaching in Japan

Japan's isolationist policy (from 1638 onwards) ended in 1853 (Hagerman, 2009). The Meiji period (1868-1911) was a time of openness, reform, and change in every sphere of public life: economic, political, social – and educational (Bouchard, 2017; Hagerman, 2009). Education was centralized, and English was introduced into the national language curriculum in 1871 (Hagerman, 2009). However, the backlash against English grew (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006) as Japan became more powerful internationally and nationalism grew (Sullivan & Schatz, 2009), and English education was dropped from the national curriculum in the 1930s (R. S. Anderson, 1975; Hagerman, 2009).

After the Second World War, English became part of the national curriculum again (Bouchard, 2017; Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006). As the Japanese economy strengthened, the government started focusing on internationalization, with English language learning forming a key part of this plan (Kubota, 1998). However, though English appears in the national curriculum in junior and senior high school levels, teaching is test oriented (Bouchard, 2017) as the students study to pass the English component of the university entrance exam. English is taught from primary school onwards, and forms an important part of the country (McKenzie, 2010) The JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) Program, focused on improving Japanese students' English abilities by bringing native English-speaking teachers to schools in the nation, began in the 1970s. Hagerman (2009) argues that there is a tension in Japan between wanting access to useful foreign ideas, and staying clear of foreign influences.

2.10.2 English language teaching in South Korea

English came to South Korea in the 1880s, in Western-style schools run by the government and by missionaries (MOE & HRD, 2008). Korea was annexed by Japan in 1910 and did not regain independence till 1945. During this time, education was limited and focused on building links to Japan. Currently, English is taught for an

hour or two a day from the third grade of primary school onwards, with native English-speaking teachers assigned to many primary, middle, and high schools (MOE & HRD, 2008).

The need to remain competitive in a globalised world, where English and technological skills are crucial, has led the Korean government to prioritise the teaching and learning of English in Korea (B. Lee, 2008; Yim, 2007). English is considered an important part of the globalization of South Korea, but is used more to obtain jobs and entry into schools than as a language in use (B.-R. Kim, 2015; J. Lee, 2010).

2.11 Teacher identity

The literature on teacher identity has several foci: on personal and professional identity formation, on the development of expertise and the difference between novice and expert teachers, on the role of emotion in teaching. We know that teaching and the teacher cannot be separated: the teacher's past experiences as a student as well as past teaching experiences, the time they have spent teaching, the stories they have heard and told about teaching, the workplace and the teaching context, all influence the development of teacher identity. Teachers do not teach in isolation, therefore their interactions with colleagues, students, the administration all play a role in shaping teacher identity. What we know about teaching can be summarized into the following points:

1. *Experiences affect and shape perceptions of identity. Teaching identity is shaped as much by events outside the classroom, as by those within the classroom.* How teachers see themselves is a work-in-progress, influenced by both internal and external factors (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Therefore, an interview with a teacher is a snapshot frozen in time: the teacher keeps evolving, new experiences, and new, or different, contexts, lead to past and current events being interpreted in different ways.

Teachers' identities are shaped by their personal experiences, their own history, classroom experiences, relationships with colleagues and students, and within the community (Day et al., 2006). Teachers' past experiences when they were students, cultural, historical and societal expectations of teachers and on the teaching situation, pre-service studies, time spent teaching, and interactions with other teachers all

combine to shape teacher identity (Bukor, 2013; Cooper & Olson, 1996; Golombek, 1998). Selfhood is constructed and modified by these relationships. Their past language learning experiences play an important role in developing these teaching selves (Tsui, 2007a, 2007b) – successful learning experiences are transferred over to teaching. These past experiences are nuanced: their educational background affects their teaching philosophy, while their work history influences how they teach (Aguilar et al., 2015)

Studies into EFL teachers' lives and experiences should have three foci: into their experiences as learners of teaching (not on their experiences as teachers of learners); contextually placed within their workplace; as teachers (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). To understand what teachers do in class, one must understand who they are: equally, for teachers to understand what they do in class, and why, they need to understand who they are (Farrell, 2016, 2018a, 2018b). Teachers' belief systems inform their teaching (J. C. Richards, 1996; Farrell, 2018b). Teachers transfer what they have learnt about themselves, from past learning experiences, to their teaching, assuming that their students need what they themselves needed as learners (Golombek, 1998).

2. *As teachers develop expertise, their focus shifts from self to the student.* When teachers begin teaching, they are more focused on their own teaching selves than on students (Numrich, 1996). As they develop expertise in teaching, their focus shifts from subject matter expertise, to didactical (focused on teaching and learning processes) and pedagogic (focused on helping the students develop emotionally, morally and socially) concerns (Beijaard et al., 2000), but teachers do not realize that their self-perception has changed. Novice teachers rigidly follow the rules they have been taught, while experienced teachers are able to diverge from their teaching plan to take advantage of teachable moments (Berliner, 1994, 2004). The focus experienced teachers have on the students and their needs can lead to them subverting the syllabus, to teach what they think the students' need to know (O'Connor & Scanlon, 2005). Experienced teachers find it difficult to give prescriptive advice on how to teach a group of students they do not know, in a context they are unfamiliar with, because their teaching has evolved to the point where their bank of knowledge gives them many tools to draw from, and their understanding of classroom situations feels intuitive and difficult to break down (Berliner, 2004).

3. *Positive feedback reinforces identity and encourages activities to build mastery.* Identity is formed when (1) the teacher realises that they are recognised and valued for being good teachers (Wenger, 1998), and (2) adopts practices that show that they have legitimate access to the teaching community, such as by getting a Master's degree (Tsui, 2007b). Positive feedback can therefore be external - validation from peers, students, or others in the teaching environment, or it can be internal, where teachers pursue further professional development options which will lead to a deeper understanding and a deeper embedding in the field.

4. *Living and working in other cultures permanently changes a person,* leading them to see themselves and their home culture through different, more critical lenses (M. J Bennett, 2009; Merryfield, 2000). Thus, living overseas is an agent for the development of self-awareness and awareness of the *Other*. In examining the lives of teachers, attention should be paid to the experiences in other cultures that teachers talk about as shaping their identity. These experiences are related to living in another place, and not necessarily directly related to the classroom.

5. *Teachers are storied beings. These stories both shape and reflect their identities.* Teacher-constructed narratives of their past, of both personal and pedagogical events, shape teacher identities (Cohen, 2010; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Cooper & Olson, 1996). Teachers talking about teaching cannot separate this from talking about their students and about their sense of self as teachers – these 'narratives of action' are also embedded in what Husu (2003) calls 'school' and 'life' contexts. Teachers' narratives can be analysed as 'narratives in action', constantly creating and recreating the speaker. Teachers express and maintain their identity through language and discourse (Gee, 2008; Maclure, 1993; Varghese et al., 2005). Teachers' social interactions with colleagues within their schools and within the professional organisations to which they belong, where they share stories about their teaching, leads to a deeper understanding of themselves and their skills as teachers, and to a deeper understanding of the world around them (Cirocki & Farrell, 2017).

6. *The interlinking of teachers' lives and work means that studies need to build up a holistic picture of the teacher.* Teacher identity is formed in a crucible where self, other, social processes, and cultural context interact (Varghese et al., 2005). Nias (1993), drawing on her study of primary school teachers, offers several insights into

teaching. Teaching is an individualistic profession¹⁹ (also Britzman (1986) talking about secondary school teachers) where the focus is on the teacher-student relationship. Teachers, whether beginners, novices, or experts, share one characteristic: they relate to their job via their personal lives. They act and think based on their own, unique life experiences. Teaching also provides a space for teachers' creativity, and teachers invest self and personally-sourced material resources in teaching. When teachers see teaching in terms of their relationship with students, it becomes an ever-increasing source of emotional satisfaction. However, because their job is closely linked to their sense of identity, and because of their emotional and creative investment in teaching, teachers need to feel in control, and act to oppose or reject what they see as threatening, because it threatens their sense of self. Day and Leitch (2001) pick up Nias' (1993) points about emotional investment and teacher identity and focus on the feedback loop between emotion and thought within the teacher, and how this fuels their interaction with the political and social context within which they work. They argue that the personal and professional needs of the teacher are often ignored in schools, which contributes to their increasing stress levels. Therefore, for teachers to understand their reactions to current events, reflection, through narrative, upon past events that shaped their emotional responses and thoughts is needed, to help them work through these earlier experiences and, perhaps, become more open to responding in new ways²⁰.

“The search for understanding teacher identity requires the connection of emotion with self-knowledge,” concurs Zembylas (2003, p. 213), echoing the idea of a feedback loop between emotion and teacher identity that informs teacher behaviour, and clarifying that emotion is socially constructed, in relationships with family, the school, and culture. Emotions “provide meaning to experiences” (Zembylas, 2003, p. 222), with the same emotion linking different events, and different emotions being focused on when talking about the same event, in different contexts. Narrative

¹⁹ Britzman (1986) argues that the three central cultural myths around teachers: that everything depends on them, that they are experts, and that teachers are self-made, all valorize the teacher as individual, and downplay the web of relationships (with students, the curriculum, the school) and social structures that exist in dialectical relationship with their teaching and selves.

²⁰ This reflection can take place individually or in groups – reflective practice is a growing field in ELT, popularised by Thomas Farrell (see Cirocki and Farrell, 2017; Farrell, 2016, 2018a, 2018b for example).

research helps us understand emotion and identity in teachers, by focusing on what stories teachers choose to tell and how these are told.

7. *Teachers play several roles in the classroom. They have more investment in the roles that are self-imposed.* Farrell (2011) studied three experienced female ESL teachers in Canada, who had also taught EFL in the past, to develop a Taxonomy of Experienced ESL Teacher Role Identity. The three main roles were: teacher as manager, teacher as acculturator, and teacher as professional. The ‘manager’ role identity focused on controlling what happened in the classroom, through controlling interactions in the classroom, motivating the students, giving feedback and information, and trying to control all other aspects of the class situation. As acculturator, the teachers socialized with the students, and tried to give them advice—focusing on what happened outside the class. The third role identity teachers took on was that of the professional, working collaboratively with other teachers, trying to improve their teaching through taking up professional development opportunities. Teachers felt that three role identities were imposed on them by students or administration: that of entertainer (by both groups) and of vendor (by administration) of English (both falling under ‘teacher as manager’), and that of ‘careprovider’, by the students. These identities caused some discomfort.

8. *Experienced language teachers share similar values.* Senior (2006) found several values that ESL teachers shared: the belief that a friendly and nurturing classroom environment would facilitate language learning, and that a teacher needed to make a personal connection with individual students, as well as have rapport with the group, and a desire to weld the class into a cohesive group, where the students are responsive and enthusiastic and willing to interact with their peers.

To summarize, teachers’ lives and work cannot be separated. A holistic picture of a teacher looks at both their life and teaching contexts, incorporating teachers’ stories of teaching and of their personal lives. Teachers’ emotions are affected in several ways by teaching: their relationship with their students brings satisfaction, and not feeling in control of their professional life causes teachers stress. Teachers play several roles in the classroom, to accommodate students’ needs and their own, but are dissatisfied when roles are imposed upon them by students or administrative staff. This section outlined what is known about teacher identity in general, looking at studies of pre- and in-service teachers, of primary, secondary, and further

education teachers teaching in school systems in their countries, and also of ESL and EFL teachers, and of native and non-native English-speaking teachers. The subsequent sections look specifically at what is known about native English-speaking teachers (NESTs).

2.12 The native English speaker teaching EFL

There are several issues surrounding the concept of the ‘native speaker’ in English language teaching. The simple statement that native speakers are people for whom English is their first language contains a number of assumptions in the English language teaching context, assumptions that posit the native English speaker as the best teacher and model of the language. Native English speakers are often assumed to be monolingual and monocultural (Kramsch, 1998), White (Kubota & Lin, 2006; Weekly, 2018), from particular countries and speaking particular varieties of English (Copland, Davis, Garton, & Mann, 2016; Weekly, 2018). They are regarded as authentic users of the English language, and able to transmit the cultural context native English speakers live in (Kramsch, 1998). This is problematic because English is seen as a tool of Western or American colonialism or imperialism, with NESTs an army pushing their language on other cultures (A. Holliday, 2006). The English language is sold as a *lingua nullius*, accompanied by a *cultura nullius* to the world (Phillipson, 2017). Two implications follow from this. First, English language teaching is on a mission to bring the language, and the superior culture it represents, to passive, collectivist, dependent non-native English-speaking cultures (A. Holliday, 2006). Secondly, English language teaching contradicts itself, teaching the equal value of all accents and dialects, then refusing to hire teachers who are non-native speakers (Canagarajah, 1999). The concept of the native English speaker is therefore a problematic one in English language teaching, implying the privileging of certain types of English over others, and certain people, as authentic conveyers of the language and culture, over others.

Despite these issues with the concept of the native speaker teacher of English, native English-speaking teachers are in high demand in several non-English-speaking countries (Copland, Davis, et al., 2016; Copland, Garton, et al., 2016). In Japan, the NEST is the desired ‘ideal’ English teacher, because of the valorization of English-speaking cultures (Kubota, 1998; Kubota & McKay, 2009; Lawrence, 2016; Rivers

& Ross, 2013). American aid to Koreans after the Korean war led to an assumption of native speaker superiority, a superiority that could be acquired by speaking English (Bae, 2015). In Korea, white NESTs are regarded as symbols of English-speaking countries and they become valuable commodities in the English language teaching marketplace (Alpaugh, 2015; Christensen, 2014; DeChamplain, 2017).

The commodification of NESTs has many implications. Firstly, NESTs are financially rewarded just for being native English speakers. Fithriani (2018) reviews four studies of EFL teaching in Asia to summarize the issues as follows: NESTs are privileged by language teaching institutions because students think a native speaker is of greater value. The preference for NESTs is expressed openly in job advertisements. There is also a preference for specific countries, predominantly the US. Teaching qualifications are not required of NESTs, but are required for NNESTs, however, these unqualified NESTs are paid more than qualified NNESTs. The preference for NESTs can be racist when it is assumed that NEST = White. Some non-White NESTs are seen as NNESTs in these countries because they are not White.

Secondly, NESTs are valued for their *difference* from the local teachers. This difference can be seen as a positive or as a negative. When positive, NESTs are valued for bringing 'authentic English' to the locals, and for bringing a different perspective to the country. NESTs are considered to be more familiar with authentic English (Barratt & Kontra, 2000; Medgyes, 2001; Tajeddin & Adeg, 2016), and more fluent speakers (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; C. Tang, 1997). They are assumed to be cultural experts (Barratt & Kontra, 2000; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014), and to have better pronunciation than NNESTs (Jenkins, 2005; R.-N. Kim & Kim, 2011; McKay, 2003; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). They are also valued more for personal characteristics, such as being kind to students and having a good sense of humour (Matikainen, 2015).

Within the same country, learners' opinions of NESTs are different depending on which learners are interviewed. For example, Kim and Kim's study (2011) of Korean learners found that NESTs were regarded as more fluent, more prepared for the class, better trained and better able to teach speaking, writing, and listening. However, the adult students Han (2005a) interviewed claimed that the NESTs were arrogant, unwilling to adapt to or understand Korean cultural norms, ethnocentric, and

uncaring (which he attributed to the students expecting NESTs to conform to Confucian norms in the classroom). Thus, there are certain expectations of NEST behaviour in the classroom.

Thirdly, though being a native English speaker might help a teacher get jobs more easily, once they are in those jobs, they are less likely to be regarded as professional, qualified, or worthy of promotion, and can be marginalized and discriminated against (Rivers, 2017). In Japan, the NEST is often a victim of national and cultural policies preventing him/her from contributing in a meaningful manner, because of Japanese nationalism (Kubota, 1998).

2.13 NES EFL teachers: what we know

Investigations into the lives of NESTs have become increasingly popular in recent years, but still account for only a small fraction of the studies on EFL teaching. Generally, the studies have found the following:

- Teachers fall accidentally into the profession, motivated by a desire to travel overseas or make money (Alpaugh, 2015; Christensen, 2014; Gilman, 2016; Johnston, 1997; Mullock, 2009; Phillips, 1989; Tsutsumi, 2013). They generally do not stay in the profession for a long time.
- Teachers change jobs frequently (Gilman, 2016; Johnston, 1997). However, the possibility of frequent job changes keeps teachers motivated (Gilman, 2016). In Japan, many NESTs have to work in more than one workplace to make ends meet (Tsutsumi, 2013).
- Many teachers entered the profession without formal teaching qualifications (Alpaugh, 2015; Gilman, 2016; Johnston, 1997; Joun, 2015), In addition, many of these teachers show no interest in professional development, or in learning about English language teaching techniques (Alpaugh, 2015).
- Teachers who chose to stay in the profession did so because they were in relationships with locals, or because they wanted to finance future travel (Gilman, 2016; Mullock, 2009).
- Many NES teachers report problems with their jobs: a lack of job security or of jobs that appeal to them (Johnston, 1997; Joun, 2015; Phillips, 1989); clashes with the administration or supervisors (Alpaugh, 2015; Brundage, 2007; Christensen, 2014; Gilman, 2016; Oliver, 2009) or with students (Brundage,

2007; Tsutsumi, 2013). (Note that clashes with administration and with students as a source of problems for NES EFL teachers have also been mentioned in other countries, such as Turkey (T. Han & Mahzoun, 2017).) Teachers who plan to stay in EFL look for university jobs, and often study for graduate degrees as this offers them greater security (Nagatomo, 2014).

- In South Korea and Japan, race and nationality were associated with ‘native speaker’ status, and there was a preference for White NES teachers (Alpaugh, 2015; DeChamplain, 2017; Joun, 2015; Rivers & Ross, 2013; Whitsed & Volet, 2013). (Javier (2010) notes that this bias also exists in China.)
- Altruistic rewards were important in keeping teachers teaching: the joy of watching their students succeed, the desire to give something back to the country they worked in, as well as the intrinsic rewards of personal and professional growth (Mullock, 2009; Oliver, 2009; Tsutsumi, 2013).

The earliest systematic study of the experiences of EFL teachers appears to be a study titled, ‘Pilot study of the career paths of EFL teachers’, commissioned by the Centre for British teachers in 1989 (Phillips, 1989). The study was carried out by David Phillips, who surveyed 160 teachers working for the Centre in the UK and in Brunei, at International House, and by students enrolled in PGCE, Diploma, or Master’s degree programs at the Institute of Education and at Manchester and Lancaster universities. The study found that EFL teachers generally got into the field because they wished to travel, and had few plans or aspirations for the future. Many left after three to five years teaching, and, in terms of age, many teachers left the profession between the ages of 35 and 45. Those who left generally did so because of the lack of a career path, lack of security, or the inability to find a job that appealed to them – in fact, Phillips considered that EFL teaching had more in common with an industry than a profession. An issue with Phillips’ study is that it merges the voices of practicing NESTs (working predominantly in Brunei) with the voices of pre-service teachers in Britain.

A seminal study of EFL teachers was conducted by Bill Johnston in 1997, with EFL teachers in Poland. He confirmed what Phillips had already found: that EFL teachers’ focus was not on teaching EFL, but on living in different countries, and that there were few defined career paths for EFL teachers (Johnston, 1997). Johnston

concluded that EFL teachers did not have careers: they fell accidentally into teaching, wandered from job to job, and only had a day-to-day commitment to their jobs, with the prospect of leaving EFL ever-present in their minds. While the Phillips (1989) study merged the voices of practicing and pre-service NESTs, the Johnston study (1997) merged the voices of NEST and (NNESTs) in Poland.

Another important study was conducted by Mullock (2009), who focused predominantly on native English-speaking teachers (20 out of 23 teachers interviewed) working in South East Asia. The teachers she interviewed had been teaching for one to over twenty-five years. Mullock found that teachers gave many reasons for entering teaching: in order of popularity, these were positive teaching experiences, falling into teaching, a desire to change careers, travel, or accidental factors. Though the initial exposure to the field of TESOL was accidental, teachers made a deliberate choice to become teachers in order to maintain relationships, to facilitate the acquisition of skills needed to pursue job opportunities in their field or because they wanted to travel. Teachers predominantly mentioned intrinsic or altruistic rewards they got from teaching, such as the joy of helping students learn and seeing them 'get it', helping the country and giving something back to the country, and growing as a person and as a professional.

While Tsutsumi (2013) merged the voices of native (5) and non-native (10) English-speaking teachers in Japan in her study of motivation in EFL, her study provides insight into the working lives of EFL teachers in that country. 15 of the sixteen teachers worked part-time, teaching at multiple universities in the Kanto area, which Tsutsumi claims is usual for the EFL field. Three of the five NESTs stated that they became English teachers because they wanted to work overseas. One of the five liked the feeling of connection he had with his students and liked helping them. Two NESTs had problems with the passivity of the students and their lack of participation and enthusiasm.

Like the teachers Tsutsumi (2013) studied, the 43 NES EFL teachers in Japan Whitsed and Volet (2013) spoke with also taught at multiple universities. The teachers were divided between those that felt undervalued, hired for their looks and thus commodified, and therefore pursuing their personal interests in class, and those that reacted with greater professionalism to the same feelings. Teaching at a Japanese university, with the greater pay, longer holidays, greater control over teaching, and

the higher status NES EFL teachers enjoyed, was regarded as the best a NES EFL could aspire to. However, curricular decisions were made by Japanese staff, which contributed to the disempowerment these teachers felt.

Nagatomo (2014) also found that teachers who wanted to stay in the EFL field looked for university jobs, with tenure being the desired goal. In pursuit of a tenured university position, teachers were more likely to study for graduate degrees and join professional development organisations. These (NES EFL female) teachers were often in relationships with Japanese partners. White male NES teachers were treated better than female NES teachers, with the latter often marginalized because they miss out on the socializing expected of male teachers.

Recently, there have been a few Master's and doctoral theses that have focused on the experiences of native English-speaking teachers in *hagwons* (private language schools) (Alpaugh, 2015; DeChamplain, 2017) or universities (Joun, 2015) in South Korea, or who had taught, or were currently teaching in Japan (among other countries) (Ford, 2012; Gilman, 2016). For example, Alpaugh (2015) surveyed 49 NESTs working in *hagwons* in South Korea. He reported a hiring bias in the *hagwons* towards White Americans or Canadians. The teachers were primarily motivated by the desire to earn money and to travel, and did not plan to spend a long time in Korea. They were frustrated by their interactions with *hagwon* administration, but were still satisfied with their teaching context and their own effectiveness as teachers, despite having little to no familiarity with language teaching techniques or methodologies, and being unwilling to participate in any professional development activities (training courses or workshops, or reading literature on ELT). The picture he presented of NES EFL teachers was not flattering: they were unprofessional and were not conscious of their feelings of superiority or arrogance towards the teaching profession and to their students.

DeChamplain (2017) analysed the advertising for *hagwon* teachers in South Korea. Her study found a preference for White NESTs in advertising, in particular in *hagwons* that specialized in younger students, and a belief among Koreans that White NESTs spoke English better than NNESTs, thereby linking race and language. NESTs were an object of the Korean gaze, a marker of prestige, that allowed the *hagwon* to leverage Whiteness into higher fees.

Joun (2015) conducted semi-structured interviews with five native speaker (4 from the US, 1 Canadian) EFL teachers who taught (3 teachers) or had taught (2 teachers) English at university level in South Korea. His teachers were aware that the native English-speaking teacher was not highly regarded in Korea, and identified problems with the work context that could contribute to this: the hiring of incompetent or 'weirdo' teachers by Koreans eager to have a white teacher, temporary job contracts that meant that teachers had no incentive to suggest improvements to the system, student evaluations based on popularity, and the precedence given to exams, governmental and business interests over the actual learning of English to any degree of communicative fluency. Though teachers were able to identify ways to improve students' communicative fluency, they were powerless to implement these, and were aware that the hiring of NESTs was, in part, cosmetic. NESTs, in Joun's study, fell into two categories: they were both objects and, simultaneously, victims of cultural differences and of Korean culture.

Gilman (2016) interviewed four NES EFL teachers, working in different countries, and with 5 to 16 years of experience teaching English. He found that, because of their accidental entry into teaching, teachers took more time to work out their teaching identity, and that the development of a teaching identity was often linked to deciding to take on teaching qualifications. The teachers he interviewed also tended to change jobs fairly frequently, and he saw these moves as important in keeping them in teaching. External factors unrelated to teaching, such as the desire to travel, or marriage to a local, were more important in determining teachers' decisions to stay in EFL (three of the four were married to locals and therefore planned to stay in that country for the foreseeable future). Again, the biggest source of stress for teachers was the clash between teacher and administration, especially with regards to teaching to the test, and prioritizing test taking skills over communicative fluency.

Two studies from South Korea, both written using a more anecdotal approach rather than academic, showed that NESTs in that country experienced more stress in the workplace than in the country. To Brundage (2007), the main causes of stress in the school came from student misbehavior and from a lack of management support. Teachers coped with the stress by drinking alcohol²¹, and by doing exercise. Choi's

²¹ Brundage found his teachers in shopping centres, on the street, at grocery stores, and at the Deep-In, the local foreigner bar. Having lived in Korea, and having been to the Deep-In, I am not surprised that he found that

(2008) study of postings on Dave's ESL Cafè regarding Korea found that teachers posted slightly more problems with working in Korea (43%) than living in Korea (38%).

2.14 Summary

This chapter has outlined what is known about identity, culture, and the particular places that the teachers in this study come from and work in. It found that identity is (1) something that sets us apart from each other, but also (2) something that groups us with others, and (3) something that is forged in interaction, but (4) temporal, affected by time, (5) relational, affected by who the *Other* thinks we are, not only by who we think we are, and (6) expressed through language. Culture also carries dual meanings of inclusion and exclusion within itself. There is a conflation of national identity and cultural identity, where national identity (the history of a country and historical events of importance that have affected that country) is blended with cultural identity (rules for living one's life and socializing with others) and with language (a national language, to express a shared worldview). Thus, for example, Australians are said to be low key and casual (cultural identity), using a lot of abbreviations in their speech (linguistic trait), and this is traced to descendance from convicts (a historical fact) to create a national 'egalitarian' identity. Discussion of cultural differences is expressed within national groupings and boundaries in the works of Hofstede (2005; 2010), Nisbett (2003) and others.

A large part of this literature review was devoted to a study of national identity and culture, in order to build up a picture of two different worlds: the one that the teachers come from, with its value systems and the worldviews the teachers were raised and steeped in, and the one that the teachers work in. Understanding these differences is crucial to understanding the specific problems NES EFL teachers face, and their reactions to these is crucial to understanding teacher resilience and putting into perspective the challenges long-term NES EFL teachers face and their stories of coping, surviving and succeeding in these worlds. The teachers come from countries that regard themselves as multicultural. The countries are low-context, individualistic, and with low power distance between employees and employers. Schedules are rigidly adhered to, and independence is encouraged from a young age.

teachers coped by drinking alcohol.

The countries the teachers work in, Japan and South Korea, differ greatly from the countries they come from. Interdependence is encouraged, social relations are prioritized over schedules, while a more rigid hierarchy of power governs relations in the workplace.

People who move to another country and are faced with cultural differences choose to assimilate or integrate into the culture they live in, or to remain segregated or marginalized. Their adaptation to cultural differences falls along a curve from ethnocentric to ethnorelative, where personal characteristics and motivations, as well as the culture's attitude towards immigrants all play a part in determining the degree to which the person will become more tolerant of these differences.

Reflection R2: Conflicted loyalties

I turn now to a moment in the interviews when I had great difficulty listening to the teacher, John’s, stories of his time in Korea because of my own emotional reactions. These reactions recur every time I listen to or read the transcript of that section of the interview. Problematic moments like this are common in qualitative research (Finlay, 2002; Hedican, 2006): moments of reacting emotionally instead of listening non-judgmentally, moments that haunt because of one’s own actions in that moment. In this reflection, I provide personal insight from two people – myself and John – into the cultural events and issues that affect NES EFL teachers living and working in other countries, and also insight into the difficulties in analysing and writing up research when the subject matter touches the researcher deeply.

The teacher John had finished working in Korea six months before I interviewed him. (He was working in Japan when interviewed.) He talked about being “shell-shocked” by his time in Korea, and still recovering from this, and “expos(ed) his demons” by talking at length about the issues he had with living and working in Korea. The issues are summarized in Table R2.1 (they are also discussed in chapters [4](#) and [5](#)):

Table R2.1: John’s issues with Korea.

Work	Administration-related issues	Staff telling lies about not having documentation that the teacher needed, or teachers not being able to change classrooms, or get refunds Teachers being cheated out of severance pay
	Student-centred issues	Students telling obvious lies to get their own way, and not being apologetic when caught out. Students being forced to drink alcohol (membership training)
	Korean teachers	Korean elementary school English teachers prioritize grammatical accuracy over factual accuracy.
Life		Conspiracy theories that pass for facts, “the rudeness, the people breaking in front of you in line, pushing, the spitting inside of buildings, the public urination, the national inability to drive” Koreans mistreating other Koreans (cheating them out of money).

My problem was that I could not refute John's stories, yet felt it would be disloyal to Korea to tell them. Telling the stories would also expose both John and me to the judgment of people who read this thesis. I had lived and worked in Korea for six years at the time of the interview. My first year in Korea had been horrible, so I had stories of my own that matched John's. My employers paid me less than they should have done for the first month I worked there, and did not pay me the airfare they owed me at the end of my contract. The 'big boss' changed the contract so that, instead of only teaching *hagwon* classes at a university, I was also farmed out to local primary and high schools, in three different cities, and spent my day travelling between workplaces. I was constantly threatened by eviction because the landlord hadn't been paying his loans or bills, and the university would sort the problems out at the very last minute. Qualified Korean teachers lost their jobs so that the company could make more money sending native English speakers out to teach. There were also issues with misbehaving students, but those were minor compared to the problems created by the company administration. I could not deny the truth in what John was saying.

However, the next five years I had spent in Korea had been (predominantly) very good. I felt valued at my next workplace, which took the unprecedented (in my experience) step of cutting our work hours, without reducing our pay. I earned enough to pay off a home loan, pay for a Master's degree, save money, *and* travel. I was very involved with KOTESOL – giving presentations, helping organise conferences, having a say in the direction KOTESOL was going. I had made good friends. I felt a deep gratitude and loyalty to Korea which made it difficult for me to listen to the negative things John had to say about the country.

As a researcher conducting interviews for my thesis, I was grateful to John for taking part in the study, and felt a rapport with him that meant that I didn't want to expose him to the judgment of others. However, as an aspiring member of a research community, I felt I was betraying Korea in talking of the negative aspects of living and working in the country. This made me feel defensive: I did not want to expose either myself or John to the judgment of others who would read this thesis, nor did I want Korea to come across in a negative light.

Chapter 3: Methodology

[Chapter 2](#) traced various strands that feed into teacher identity, such as past experiences in a teacher's life and their present interpretations of past events. Self-identity comes not only from what the individual thinks and believes, but also from what others think and say. Therefore, identity is co-constructed, modified through interaction with different people, and self is an active process of becoming, in which nationality, culture, and ethnicity also play a role. Identity is modified when an individual moves to another country and interacts with another culture, with teachers' identities bound up with their lives and experiences. As such, to understand teachers' lives, it is important to listen to their voices and the stories they tell. This chapter addresses the choice of narrative inquiry as a research method, the design of the study, the choice of interviews as the primary research tool, and outlines how the participating teachers were chosen, interviewed, and their stories coded and analysed.

As publications in the teaching field have shown (Bell, 2002; Benson, Barkhuizen, & Chik, 2014; Ershler Richert, 2002; Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002), narrative inquiry, with its foregrounding of the voices of research participants, and on their understanding of the world (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), is ideally suited to listening to and reporting on teachers' voices, and creating a thick and rich description of their worlds. Narrative inquiry shares with other forms of qualitative research an understanding of reality as multiple, relative, and ever-changing (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1987; R. M. Thomas, 2003). Narrative inquiry (NI) is about stories, and foregrounds the subjectivity of individual constructions of self and experiences of the world. It is a study of people in relation to their experience, in relation to their construction of self, in relation to the context (such as an interview) (Olson, 1995). Narrative inquiry reveals personal truths – how people construct and perceive their lives (LaBoskey & Lyons, 2002; Webster & Mertova, 2007). Therefore, the focus is not on an objective, external truth, but on the subjective ways in which people integrate their experiences into a coherent life story, and what this reveals about them and the world around them. Narrative inquiry foregrounds subjective, individual experience, and the subjective nature of the analysis of this experience, in order to find something universal.

Narrative inquiry places the teacher in the midst of their own story (Ochs & Capps, 1996), making sense of their experiences, interpreting past and current events, revealing their preoccupations and constructions of self. The stories teachers tell are influenced by time, context, their interpretation of events, and who and where they see themselves as being (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Through narrative inquiry, their experiences and their understanding of their selves-as-teachers are recorded (Carter, 1993; Shacklock & Thorp, 2005). In addition, narrative gives us insight into different worlds. It provides a means of understanding different experiences, that can also bring understanding across cultural boundaries (White, 1981). It helps us understand different attitudes and approaches to situations: how differences in experience, and in perception of experience shape each person's understanding of events (Bell, 2002; Olson, 1995).

Criticisms have been levelled at narrative inquiry that can be difficult to counter: that it is limited by the subjectivity of the narrator and of the analyser (Peshkin, 1988), or that the narrative is often reduced to repetition of the words of the research participant, instead of providing an analysis of what was said (Pavlenko, 2007), or that the truth on view in narrative inquiry is a subjective, personal one, which does not necessarily make it credible or trustworthy (Bowman, 2006). However, qualitative research is based on inductive reasoning, and on situational specificity (William Wiersma & Jurs, 2005; Yilmaz, 2013). The range of criteria on which qualitative studies are assessed take into account the subjective, multiple realities approach to truth, and the holistic focus that these contain, and include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1987; Webster & Mertova, 2007; Yilmaz, 2013). Those criteria require decisions to be made during the research process, clearly outlining how the study was framed in the research design (Creswell, 2007). The onus is on the researcher to show that the study was designed and carried out in such a way that the results can be seen as reliable and valid (Morse, 2018). By explaining how the research study was designed, planned, and carried out, and discussing how member checking and peer review were employed and the keeping of journals as an audit trail, all techniques that Morse (2018) endorses as verification strategies, this study counters the criticisms of narrative inquiry.

3.1 Research design

The first stage of the study was to design and send out of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent out in order to: (1) locate native English-speaking English-as-a-foreign-language (NES EFL) teachers who met the study parameters and were willing to participate in interviews, and (2) collect background information about the teachers' work and personal contexts. The collected data were used to assist me with choosing the interview participants, and to later reduce the length of the interviews with them. The second, and more important, stage of the study, were the interviews I conducted with the eight teachers who met the study parameters. The interview data was transcribed, coded, and then analysed using narrative inquiry techniques.

3.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaire (see [Appendix A](#)) opened, on Survey Monkey, on the 29th of January 2011, and closed on the 10th of March, 2011²². Survey Monkey was used because of the advantages it provided as an online tool. It was easily accessible by the pool of NES EFL teachers in South Korea and Japan, it collected responses rapidly, and enabled many people to be surveyed at the same time (Treadwell, 2011; Wadia & Parkinson, 2014; Wright, 2005) and was, to an extent, cost-effective: there were no printing or postage charges, but there was a membership fee (250USD for a year's membership). In addition, it was more time-efficient, as more teachers could complete the questionnaire simultaneously, the data collected downloaded readily and was easily usable and manipulable online, and the downloads removed the need to do double data entry from paper to Excel.

Convenience and snowball sampling (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003) determined the selection of questionnaire respondents. Convenience sampling means contacting people you have access to. Snowball sampling means that the researcher asks the people they contacted to forward the message to their own contacts as well, and so on. Teachers in both South Korea and Japan were contacted by email, and/or by Facebook Messenger, and sent a link to the Survey Monkey form, asking that they

²² A pilot questionnaire had previously been sent out to my (then) work colleagues on 25 August 2010, and was open till 2 September 2010 to test the tool. Minor formatting changes, based on feedback from the twelve respondents, were made to the questionnaire before it went live.

fill out the questionnaire and forward the email to their friends. In addition, I updated my Facebook status to show a link to the questionnaire. A copy of the email and the Facebook status update appear in [Appendix B](#). Additional, planned measures, such as publishing the link to the questionnaire on the websites and Facebook sites of JALT and KOTESOL (English language teaching organisations in Japan and South Korea, respectively) became unnecessary because a preliminary analysis of the questionnaire respondents showed that many met the parameters for the interview.

Snowball sampling influenced the pool of questionnaire respondents in two ways: 1) The people who responded to the questionnaire were either acquaintances of mine, or their friends and acquaintances. 2) My university job, and the positions I held in KOTESOL (Publications Chair, editor of various KOTESOL publications, member of the organising committee of the KOTESOL International Conferences for many years, and presenter), meant that the pool of contacts was wide among university teachers, and members of KOTESOL and JALT. The questionnaire was, therefore, disproportionately completed by NES EFL *university* teachers, many of whom were active in KOTESOL or JALT.

Although Survey Monkey allowed NES EFL teachers who met the study parameters to be easily located, only 84 responses were received during the three weeks the survey was active. The program suffered the common disadvantage of using an online questionnaire tool: low response rates (Singh, Taneja, & Mangalaraj, 2009; Wadia & Parkinson, 2014; Wybo Wiersma, n.d.). This may have been because the questionnaire was sent out during the holiday period in South Korea and Japan, and several respondents may not have had access to the Internet. As Singh, Taneja, and Mangalaraj (2009) point out, surveys sent out during holiday periods usually have a low response rate. [To put the low number of respondents in context, Korean Immigration Statistics for 2011 report a total of 36,793 foreigners from the USA, the UK, Canada, and Australia were granted E2 (teaching) visas (Korea Immigration Service Ministry of Justice, 2011). Japan does not publish statistics by visa category in English. The Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) had a membership of 2799 individual members in 2014 (Green, 2014), while the Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (KOTESOL) has a membership of around 700-1400 members a year (personal communication with the Membership Chair of KOTESOL, 2013).]

3.2.1 The questions

The questionnaire consisted of 47 items, over ten pages on the program Survey Monkey. These ten pages included an introduction to the project, and its aims and purpose, on the first page of the questionnaire. The first page also gave the respondents an email address and phone number for the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Officer, so that they could contact that office if they were concerned about the conduct of the project. On this page, respondents also chose to complete the questionnaire, by clicking on Yes / No fields.

The questionnaire then went on to collect biodata: preferred alias, age, gender, nationality and ethnicity, and further information about the respondents: the country they currently worked in and current workplace, educational and work history, English language teaching history, language learning history, their opinions on the characteristics of good teachers, students, and on the best way to learn another language, their experience of living in other countries, and staying in contact with their home country. The questions predominantly required multiple choice answers, with respondents choosing one (or more) of multiple options. Open-ended questions appeared towards the end of the questionnaire and asked the respondents about their language learning and teaching beliefs, and the benefits and challenges of working overseas. The last page of the questionnaire collected information about the teacher's willingness to participate in a follow up interview, and, if they said they would be willing to participate, their contact details.

3.2.2 Identification of teachers to be contacted for interviews

84 teachers began the questionnaire, and 70 teachers completed it. (The 14 teachers who did not complete the questionnaire generally stopped around page 7, the first page which required open-ended answers to questions.) The majority of the respondents had taught in more than one country (43), taught in South Korea (53), were male (49), American (37), and taught at universities (52). Half (35) had been teaching for more than ten years. 57 of the 70 were willing to be contacted for follow up interviews. From these 57, 22 NES EFL teachers were identified who met the study parameters: they had been teaching English for more than ten years, and had taught in more than one country. The number was evenly divided between teachers

in South Korea and teachers in Japan, however, there were more female respondents in Japan, and more male respondents in Korea who met the interview criteria.

Table 3.1 outlines the selection process of participants interviewed. In organizing the interviews, some additional criteria came into play. Firstly, three teachers were eliminated from consideration because I knew them well and did not want my previous knowledge of them to bias the interviews or the analyses. Second, all the teachers had to live in South Korea or Japan, to facilitate interviewing. This eliminated two more people, who had moved away from South Korea and Japan. Third, the survey respondents contacted had to be available for face-to-face interviews²³. Three people who were originally contacted were eliminated by this criterion, two because of health emergencies that meant that they could not be interviewed on the date arranged, and one other person because she was on holiday overseas. Fourthly, I wanted to balance the genders, by interviewing two men and two women working in each country, so as to identify any gender differences in the experience of living and teaching in other countries. This led to the inclusion of the only female teacher who met the criteria in South Korea.

Table 3.1: Choosing the teachers.

Teachers (from the survey) willing to do a follow-up interview	57
Teachers who met the criteria but were eliminated from consideration:	5
Eliminated because they were known well by the researcher:	3
Eliminated because they were no longer in Japan or South Korea	2
Teachers that met all interview criteria: (1) were willing to do a follow-up interview; and (2) had taught for 10 or more years; and (3) had taught in more than one country (4) were not well known by the researcher	22
Teachers contacted:	11
South Korea	5
Japan*	6
Teachers unable to do a face-to-face interview:	3
Teachers interviewed:	8
South Korea	4
Japan*	4

²³ This was done because practice interviews, conducted between March and May 2011, showed that the sound quality over phone or Skype conversations could vary, and cause transcription problems.

**One teacher, John, interviewed in this study, completed the questionnaire with information from his time in Korea. When he was interviewed, he had just finished his first semester in Japan.*

Data collected via the questionnaire was analysed on both Survey Monkey and Excel. All data, graphs, and figures were downloaded to Excel. The responses of the teachers who agreed to be interviewed were merged to Word documents, for ease of reading. I printed and took these Word documents to the interviews, so as to be able to ask clarification questions.

3.3 Research participants

The research participants were eight long-term NES EFL teachers, four working in South Korea, and four in Japan at the time they were interviewed. Five teachers (three in South Korea, and two in Japan) were male, and three were female. Four of the teachers were from the USA, two from Canada, and two from England. Six of the eight teachers were in their 40s, while the other two teachers were in their 30s. The two younger teachers worked in South Korea – as such, there was a greater age range among the teachers in South Korea than among the teachers in Japan. All of the teachers had taught English for more than ten years, and all had worked in at least two different countries. Three teachers had taught English in two countries, four in three countries, and one had taught English in more than five countries. They were all teaching at universities in South Korea or Japan. The biographical data on the research participants is summarised in Table 3.2. The participants were interviewed, at a place of their choosing, between June and August 2011.

Table 3.2: Teacher biographical data.

	From	Number of countries worked in	Age (range)	Years teaching English
Teachers working in Japan:				
Arielle	England	3	45-50	25
John	The USA	3	40-44	17
Simon	Canada	3	40-44	22
Zahava	Canada	2	45-50	10+

	From	Number of countries worked in	Age (range)	Years teaching English
Teachers working in South Korea:				
Beth	The USA	2	40-44	16
Gabriel	The USA	2	30-34	10+
James	The USA	5+	45-50	20
Lackey	Britain	3	35-39	10+

The names of the eight teachers, and the names of family members and other people mentioned in their narratives, have been anonymised. Four of the teachers chose their preferred pseudonym; the other four pseudonyms were chosen by me, as were the pseudonyms for family members or other people in the interviews.

3.4 The interviews

The first thing native English-speaking teachers do, when we meet in other countries, is share our stories of how we came into teaching. We share parts of our life stories, and then exchange information about the teaching context or country we currently work in. Human beings are storied animals: we tell stories to make sense of our experiences, to give these experiences meaning and force, and to pass on knowledge (L. W. Anderson, 1997; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). While there are different ways in which stories can be collected: such as through written autobiographies, and ethnographic case studies, the use of interviews was a natural choice for this study, as these most closely represent what NES EFL teachers normally do when they meet. The choice of interviews meant that I was able to meet and talk with the teacher participants face-to-face, and to gather rich data on the teachers and their worldviews in a relatively short amount of time.

Interviews are often used in qualitative research, and in narrative inquiry. They allow individuals to construct representations of themselves for later analysis (Pomerantz, 2000). They enable the interviewee to put their stories in historical and social context (Zhao & Poulson, 2006) and to reveal how they think about events in their lives, and in their contexts. The one-to-one nature of the interview sets up a personal relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, which makes interviewees invest more in participation (R. M. Thomas, 2003). Interviewees come to the

interview with an agenda: a desire to make a difference to others' lives (Miller & Glassner, 1997). Interviews also give the researcher the flexibility to follow-up on comments of interest, and for both the interviewer and the interviewee to clarify what was said or meant during the interview (Opdenakker, 2014; R. M. Thomas, 2003).

Criticism levelled at the use of the interview as a data collection technique focuses on its trustworthiness and on the time taken to interview and transcribe interviews. The personal relationship created between interviewer and interviewee might lead the interviewee to modify or direct what they say to meet (their idea of) the interviewer's goals (R. M. Thomas, 2003), and might, therefore, not be trustworthy. However, qualitative studies start with the assumption of a subjective, interactional view of reality, therefore they accept that what is said in the interview is influenced by the context, the relationship between the participants, and, potentially, by a range of other factors such as recent events in the person's life, or their mood, for example. I had conducted five practice interviews, which indicated that the interviews would last approximately half an hour. This countered the argument that the time taken to interview (R. M. Thomas, 2003) and, later, to transcribe the interviews can be extensive (Seidman, 2006). My speed at typing and medical transcription background meant that the time taken to transcribe the interviews was minimized, while doing my own transcribing deepened my knowledge of what was said (Seidman, 2006).

3.4.1 Interview structure

The interviews were carried out between late June and mid-August 2011. A semi-structured interview format was used in this study. With a semi-structured interview format, the interviewer has the benefit of defined questions, and an order in which to ask them, as well as the flexibility to diverge from these to ask respondents to clarify what they said, and to ask for greater detail on a particular topic (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2009). Thomas (2003) additionally described four strategies interviewers decide between when planning an interview: *loose-question*, *tight-question*, *converging-question*, and *response-guided*. Broadly, both *converging-question* and *response-guided* strategies were followed in the interviews: I asked the interview questions, and asked follow up questions where necessary, to give the teacher a chance to clarify their responses and to decide what information to include in a response.

3.4.2 Interview questions

There were four interview questions (see [Appendix C](#)), each with two to five follow-up questions, aimed at investigating the research questions of the study. The questions asked the teachers to talk about four areas: their background, the decision to become a teacher, their experiences teaching EFL, and their experiences of living and working in other countries. The questions predominantly encouraged open responses (for example: “Could you tell me about your background.” or “Please describe the places / environments you have worked in”), although a small number were closed-response questions (such as “Which countries have you worked in?” and “How long have you been teaching EFL?”). The closed-response questions were asked in order to collect factual data, and as a cross-check on the factual data collected by the questionnaire, while the open-response questions gave the teachers the opportunity to tell their stories the way they chose to. The interview questions did not ask the teachers to talk directly about identity but were designed to give the teachers the space to talk about their background and pre-teaching lives, the entry into teaching, the factors that led them to move from country to country or to stay in a particular country, and the ways in which they and their ideas about teaching had changed over time and in different countries. In responding to these questions, the teachers naturally touched on identity issues: their relationship with their home country and with the country in which they lived, their evolving understanding of the links between teaching and culture, and their constructions of their past and present lives.

The links between the research questions and the interview questions and sub-questions appear in Table 3.3. Interview questions are given in **bold** font, the sub-questions are in normal text. Interview sub-questions aimed at clarifying the teaching context, such as ‘Which countries have you worked in?’ are not included in the table.

Table 3.3: Relating the interview questions to the research questions.

Research questions	Interview questions
How does the experience of teaching in a non-English-speaking, non-native land contribute to, or	<p>Why did you become a teacher?</p> <p>What do you remember of your own school days? Who was/were the teacher/s who influenced you the most when you were in school? Why?</p> <p>Please describe the places/environments you have worked in.</p>

Research questions	Interview questions
shape, a native English-speaking teacher's sense of self and identity?	How would you describe your teaching self? Why? (e.g. teacher, professor) How have your ideas about teaching changed? (over time / from country to country) What teaching principles underpin your teaching? What has changed? How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live? Why? Which country / workplace was the most memorable? Why?
How do NES EFL teachers negotiate their relationship with national identity and identity as a foreigner abroad?	Could you tell me about your background. How would you describe your ethnic background? What is <u>the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country?</u> How, in your opinion, has living and working in another country changed you? How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live? Why? Do you speak the local language? Why (did you choose to learn/not learn it)? Please describe the places/environments you have worked in. Which country / workplace was the most memorable? Why?

The power in an interview situation lies with the interviewer (Anyan, 2014; Doody & Noonan, 2013; Ryan et al., 2009; R. M. Thomas, 2003). The interviewer knows what the research questions are and designs the interview questions. In an interview, the researcher decides in which order to ask the questions, and when to ask for further information, while the interviewee is constrained into a less powerful position by the unspoken, yet understood, rules of the genre, and sometimes by their lack of knowledge as to what they will be asked (Anyan, 2014; Doody & Noonan, 2013; Ryan et al., 2009; R. M. Thomas, 2003). Interviewees invest more of themselves in an interview (R. M. Thomas, 2003), as opposed to, for example, a web questionnaire, and might structure their answers to please or to help the interviewer (Doody & Noonan, 2013). To ameliorate the effect of these issues as much as possible, the interview questions were sent to the teachers a week before the interviews. The teachers chose the location of the interview, and the time of the interview was negotiated between the teacher and the researcher. In the interview, when the teacher asked clarification questions about the level of detail required, or regarding whether

their answer met my needs, I responded that they should decide what to share. It was *their* choice. For example, if at any stage in the interview, teachers wanted to make sure they were answering ‘correctly,’ I would reiterate:

I’m leaving it free to you to decide where you want to go with this.

Your choice

This strategy enabled the teachers to decide how in-depth they wished their responses to be and meant that I avoided being more intrusive than the teachers were comfortable with (Doody & Noonan, 2013).

3.4.3 Carrying out the interviews

Emails were sent out to questionnaire respondents shortlisted for contact to confirm that they were willing and available to participate in the interview component of the study. Once teachers confirmed their willingness and availability by return email, a date and location for the interview was arranged. Teachers chose the location of the interview. A week before the interview, the teachers received, via email, a copy of the Interview Informed Consent form and of the interview questions. Interviews were carried out between the 28th of June 2011, and the 17th of August, 2011: Table 3.4 shows the date, location, and duration of each interview. The shortest interview took 22 minutes, and the longest took over an hour²⁴. The length of each interview reflected the detail in which the teacher responded to the questions.

Table 3.4: Date, location, and duration of interviews.

Date	Teacher	Location (chosen by the teacher)	Duration
28 June	Beth	Korea, a coffee shop in the researcher’s city	0:48:26
3 July	Lackey	Korea, the teacher’s house	0:45:21
24 July	Zahava	Japan, the teacher’s office	0:32:53
24 July	Simon	Japan, the teacher’s office	1:00:14
31 July	John	Japan, a coffee shop in the teacher’s city	1:07:41
5 August	Arielle	Japan, a restaurant in the teacher’s city	0:22:17
12 August	Gabriel	Korea, a food court in the teacher’s city	0:51:45
17 August	James	Korea, a meeting room in the teacher’s workplace	0:41:29

²⁴ Five practice interviews, conducted between March and May 2011, had indicated that the interviews would take an average of 30 minutes.

On the interview date, I met with the teacher at the agreed upon location and time, with two mp3 recorders, the interview Informed Consent form (a copy of this appears as [Appendix D](#)), a copy of the interview questions ([Appendix C](#)) with the research questions below it (for me), and a copy of the teacher's responses to the questionnaire. The teacher read through a printed copy of the Informed Consent form, and signed and dated the form. To start the interview, I placed the mp3 recorders on the table, and asked for permission to record the interview. Once consent was granted, the interview began. Interview recordings were supplemented with scribbled notes on the interview question sheet.

The questions began with me asking the teacher about their background. From there, the question order varied slightly, depending on the teacher's response. The recorders were turned off once the interviews ended. However, in most cases, the teacher and I continued to talk for a while. Generally, the teacher asked what the research questions were, and I would share these with them. Both of us would reflect on the interview questions and the interview, and I would share my stories, especially where these resonated with the teacher's stories. After the teacher and I had parted, I wrote my reflections on the interview up as journal entries on my laptop. The teacher's responses to the questionnaire, formatted in Word and taken to the interviews, and transcripts of the interviews appear in [Appendix E](#). Full transcripts of the interviews (with names of institutions and other potentially identifying details redacted or anonymised) have been included so that the reader can conduct their own analysis of the themes that appear in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.5 Ethical clearance

The Human Ethics Application, submitted to the University of Southern Queensland's Fast Track Human Research Ethics Committee, asked for permission to collect data between the 15th of December 2010 and the 31st of December 2012. It specified that the data collection would involve both an online questionnaire and face-to-face interviews, with English teachers working in South Korea and Japan. Ethical Clearance was received on the 28th of January, 2011 (Ethical clearance number H10REA275 is included as [Appendix F](#)).

3.6 Transcribing, coding, grouping, and analysing interview data

3.6.1 Transcribing the interviews

After each interview, the mp3 recordings were transferred to a secured laptop, and saved in files under the teachers' pseudonyms. The interview recordings were transcribed using Microsoft Word, and the playback feature on VLC media player on the computer (VLC media player allowed for the slowing down of the speed of the audiofile). I transcribed the interviews. Transcribing the interview recordings provided me with the opportunity to listen closely to these several times – a sort of 'deep listening' to notice patterns and themes within and across the stories. Transcriptions were completed in the month of September 2011. In the first passes at transcription, repetitions, false starts, pauses, and other speech features were included. Spoken chunks were divided into sentences, with pauses deciding when punctuation would be used. Decisions as to which repetitions and other speech features to transcribe were made on an individual basis – as Pavlenko (2007) noted, there are no standard transcription conventions. However, the primary decision was to record all verbal and nonverbal signals, including laughs, interruptions, pauses, and external noises, to accurately reflect the interview, in context (Seidman, 2006).

I read the transcriptions and listened to the interview recordings several times over the subsequent years, to check the accuracy of the material typed, and to return to the teachers' voices and words. In 2012, my focus was on re-listening to the recordings, in order to capture codes and impressions of attitudes conveyed by the teachers. In 2013, I checked the recordings again against the transcripts, and then cleaned these up for publication in the appendices of the thesis, removing stammers and stutters, ums and ahs, and other sounds, and false starts, where these did not interfere with the teacher's style, to make the teacher's thoughts and voice clearer (Seidman, 2006). Punctuation was also checked to ensure it made the text easier to read. In 2017-2018, after a year-long gap from the thesis, I listened to the recordings again, and re-read the transcripts, along with the previous observations and related notes. In 2018, after an earlier version of the stories that appear in [Chapter 4](#) of the thesis was sent to the teachers for their review, based on anonymity concerns in the feedback received, the transcriptions were revised yet again (along with the stories). These last revisions removed or generalised all personal details that the teachers felt would be revealing. Care was taken to remove the names of all workplaces, educational institutions, and,

if asked by the teacher, the name of the city or cities where they worked. This was done to preserve the teachers' anonymity. While there are many teachers who work in South Korea and Japan, the pool of NES teachers who have worked in either of those countries, and are involved in professional development organisations, is a small one, and it would be easy for peers to identify the teachers who were interviewed were those details not modified or omitted.

3.6.2 Coding the interviews and grouping the codes

The recordings and the transcripts were saved to NVivo 9, which was used for coding the interviews, and, later, grouping the codes ([Appendix G1](#)). Codes were grouped using both holistic and categorical analysis (Josselson, 2011). In holistic analysis, the researcher reads the narrative produced, and interprets each section in relation to the rest of the narrative. This type of analysis appears in [Chapter 4](#). In categorical analysis, narratives are coded according to theme, and the themes are compared across the narratives. Categorical analysis appears in [Chapter 5](#) of the thesis.

To generate the themes for categorical analysis, Charmazian grounded theory principles were used as to code. Charmaz (2006, p. 49) expresses these as:

- *Remain open*
- *Stay close to the data*
- *Keep your codes simple and precise*
- *Construct short codes*
- *Preserve actions*
- *Compare data with data*
- *Move quickly through the data.*

The gerund form is used when coding, to preserve actions (Charmaz, 2006). I chose to code by theme. Transcripts were read, and segments, which ranged from sentences or fragments of sentences, to paragraphs, coded according to the themes that emerged from reading and listening to the interviews. Each interview was coded separately. However, NVivo provided suggestions for similar codes to those used previously, and I used those codes when appropriate. When certain terms were repeated through an interview, or across interviews, I reviewed the transcripts again and the sections coded that contained the repeated words or phrases. (One such phrase, for example, was “small town,” which was repeated by four of the teachers.)

Upon realizing, after coding the interview transcripts separately, that a term or phrase was repeated, I created a new code for each of the repeated phrases.

After coding had been completed, the codes were analysed and divided into common themes; what Charmaz (2006) calls ‘focused coding’, Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) call ‘repeating ideas’, and Richards (2015) divides into ‘topic’ and ‘analytical’ coding. At that stage, I made decisions as to whether to collapse similar codes into one, or keep these separate but group them together. For example, one code, ‘deciding between jobs’, had been used in transcribing some interviews, and another, ‘deciding between jobs and countries’ had been used in transcribing other interviews. Upon closer examination, the two codes expressed distinct differences in descriptions of events, and both were kept.

The code groupings formed the kernels of the various themes that are discussed in [Chapters 4](#) and [5](#). The codes were also downloaded to Excel, as a backup. Some specific sections of the transcripts were re-coded using Word (an example appears in [Appendix G2](#)) in an experiment with coding line by line instead of by theme.

Paralyzed by the large number of initial codes (413) and by only a slightly smaller number of common themes, I started memo-writing (Charmaz, 2006) by writing daily on the entries coded under each theme into a series of Word documents. After three months of memo-writing, the kernels of the subheadings in [Chapter 5](#) began to form. At the same time, by re-reading and listening to each transcript, themes *within* each teacher’s life story emerged. Figure 3.1 shows some of the chapters (folders, sub-folders and documents) that were created during the memo writing process and while writing the chapters of the thesis.

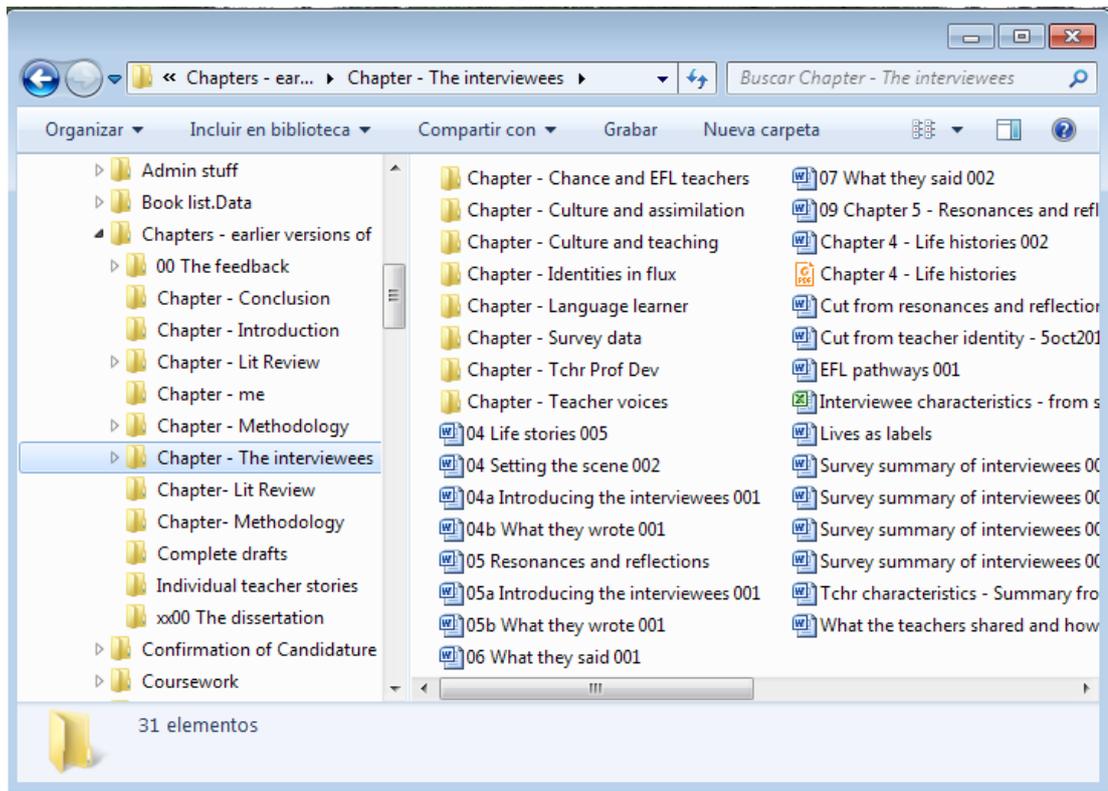


Figure 3.1: Folders, sub-folders and documents generated through memo writing that formed the kernels of themes in Chapter 5

Figure 3.2 shows some sections of the interviews transcripts that were coded as “falling into teaching by chance”. It shows the sections in the interviews with Arielle and with Lackey that were coded under this heading, and also shows the very different responses that could have ended up with the same code. A more detailed discussion of the concept of “chance” in becoming a NES EFL teacher is provided in [Chapter 5](#).

[<Internals\\Transcriptions\\Arielle>](#) - § 1 reference coded [0.30% Coverage]
 Reference 1 - 0.30% Coverage
 Because we were doing Kim at A level (laughs)

[<Internals\\Transcriptions\\Lackey>](#) - § 1 reference coded [0.80% Coverage]
 Reference 1 - 0.80% Coverage
 after that we were looking at what to do. Jane, my wife, had taken a TESOL certification - the Trinity TESOL which I think still runs - she did it in Edinburgh where we were living before we left for the ski resort thing, and she found a job for us in Korea - so that was what the summer of 2000?

Figure 3.2: Two references coded under ‘falling into teaching by chance’ in NVivo 9.

3.6.3 Technological tools assisting interview data analysis

The following software was used to complete the thesis:

Endnote / Zotero	Both programs were used to keep track of references, for compiling the reference list and for keeping notes on books and articles read. I switched from Endnote to Zotero partway through the thesis, because the latter program was easier and faster to use. (Endnote kept crashing Word.)
Foxit PDF Reader	To ensure that figures designed in PowerPoint did not lose formatting or move when transferred to Word, these were saved in Foxit and then cut and added to the Word document using the Selection tool. Foxit was also used to read pdfs of all articles and books.
Icecream Ebook reader	This program was used to read books formatted in epub on the computer.
NVivo 9	Initially, NVivo was used to code interview data. Due to problems with the software, and the company’s inability to resolve these, later coding was done in Word.
Paint	This drawing tool was used to prepare some of the figures used in the thesis.
Readera	This program was used to read books in epub, mobi, pdf, or other formats on a tablet or on a mobile phone.
Skype / Zoom	Skype and Zoom were used to communicate with the thesis supervisor, as she works in Australia, and I worked in South Korea and then in Mexico while completing the thesis.
Survey Monkey	This program was used to collect the initial questionnaire data.
The MS Office suite	Word: The thesis was written in Word. Some coding was also done using Word. Excel: This program was used to merge questionnaire data, and to prepare charts, graphs, and tables that appear in the thesis. Questionnaire data from Survey Monkey, and codes from NVivo were downloaded to Excel, both as a backup measure, and for easier and faster manipulation. PowerPoint: This program was used to prepare figures used in the thesis.
VLC Media Player	This program was used to listen to the interviews.

The following hardware was used to complete the thesis:

Mp3 recorders	Two mp3 recorders were used to record the interviews.
Samsung Netbook	The thesis was started on a Samsung Netbook. The Confirmation of Candidature, questionnaire, interviews, and initial interview transcriptions were all done on this computer.
HP G1 All-in-One, Lenovo All-in-One PCs	Data analysis and writing of the thesis after 2015 was done on these computers.

3.6.4 Member checking

Member checking was used to check the credibility of my interpretation of the interviewed teachers' stories, as documented in [Chapter 4](#). Credibility refers to the quality of the descriptions, the richness of detail they provide (E. Thomas & Magilvy, 2011; Yilmaz, 2013), and to the believability of the detail (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001; Yilmaz, 2013). Quality of detail can be monitored by sending the interviewees the write up of their interviews, and incorporating their feedback. Believability is checked by having independent EFL teachers who are not involved in the study read these narratives. Both types of checking were carried out. The teachers interviewed were sent copies of their stories in early 2018, to give them the opportunity to comment on the accuracy of the details, suggest changes, and, if they wished, withdraw permission for their use. Six of the eight teachers responded. All six confirmed that their stories could be used. None of the teachers had issues with the descriptions or the interpretation of themes in their stories: in fact, one wrote to say that he found the themes very powerful and useful in seeing himself in a different light. One teacher changed their choice of pseudonym. In a couple of cases, teachers requested minor changes to clarify or further anonymise their stories. (As indicated earlier, the pool of long-term NES EFL teachers in South Korea and Japan is relatively small, therefore revealing greater detail might lead to teachers becoming identified by their peers.) All changes requested were made.

A transferable study provides thick description of the findings: sufficient detail that readers can transfer the findings to their own settings to better understand their own context (E. Thomas & Magilvy, 2011; Yilmaz, 2013). To check believability, and transferability, versions of [Chapters 4](#) and [5](#) were sent to teachers who were not involved in the study, but had worked overseas, and/or had worked in South Korea and Japan. The feedback received was storied: these non-participating teachers

telling stories of experiences that echo events in the interviewed teachers' narratives, and reminiscing about their experiences and framing their personal stories within the themes used in the chapters. This storied feedback revealed the transferability of the narratives and analysis.

3.6.5 Journal writing

In narrative inquiry, the subjective viewpoints and understandings of the researcher interact with those of the research participants (Josselson, 2011). As in most forms of qualitative inquiry, it is important for the researcher to trace and acknowledge her own subjectivities and how these might impact the perception and reflections expressed. Keeping journals also serves as a way of verifying that the themes discussed in this thesis arose from the interviews, as they provide an audit trail recording the development of the themes (Morse, 2018). Throughout the journey, I have kept a journal, with prose and poetry, drawing and diagramming reflecting my growing understanding of components of the self-constructs of the eight teachers. Some journal entries were typed up using Word, but the vast majority were handwritten into notebooks, or drawn into a drawing book.

Data analysis and writing up the data occur together in qualitative writing, and it is often not until the end of the thesis journey that what was constructed becomes clear (Meloy, 2002). Journal entries provide a way of looking at how the themes in the thesis were developed (Morse, 2018). Several of the journal entries I wrote focused on arranging the thesis into its finished form by defining the chapter headings. Looking at the chapter headings I used over the course of the thesis therefore provides a window into the development of the analysis of themes discussed in the thesis. The themes moved from dividing the teachers' stories into discrete sections, over various chapters, as in my journal entry on the 24th of August 2015:

My dissertation was, finally, to have 8 chapters. Now it has 9: four chapters about the interviewees. The format is that of an onion – peeling away layers – first, the interviewees in labels. Then their pasts, their histories, the story of self they construct. The third of their chapters deals with their teaching selves – how they got into teaching, why they stay, what they've learnt, the influences on their teaching.

The last of the four places them in context with the cultures they come from and the cultures they live in.

through various iterations (which can be seen in [Appendix H2](#)) to a penultimate version in February 2018 which still contained a chapter about me, but had merged the stories of the teachers into two chapters, one telling their stories holistically and one categorically:

Chapter 4: Maria's stories (Intro – brief life / EFL story; A letter to John, Talking about Korea, Learning to be me, A tale of two interviews)

Chapter 5: Life (hi)stories (no change)

Chapter 6: Resonances and reflections

Samples of the journal entries are presented in [Appendix H](#). [Appendix H1](#) traces the development of the conceptual framework. [Appendix H2](#) tracks the development of the thesis chapters via journal entries dealing with how to organise the data collected. Appendices [H3](#) and [H4](#) offer samples of how the themes in [Chapter 5](#) were consolidated and developed out of earlier memo-writing and the writing of versions of the chapter. [Appendix H5](#) is a reflection on the role of the interviewer and on the interview where I was the subject. This eventually developed into [Reflection R3](#). In [Appendix H6](#), I reflect on the ways in which what the teachers said in the interviews began to interact with my own beliefs and feelings, and led me to focus on aspects of my self. The Reflections that appear between the chapters of this thesis were developed from recurring preoccupations the study raised in me while I was working on writing the chapters, preoccupations I wrote about in the journals I kept.

3.7 Thesis on hiatus

At the end of 2011, after conducting, transcribing, and beginning coding of the interviews, I left Korea and returned to Mexico, where I had worked previously. I have been working in Mexico since February 2012. While the move was good on personal grounds (house and land ownership, a tenured university job in Mexico), it was not good for the thesis. Cuts in government funding to my workplace have meant constant teacher shortages, and a corresponding increase in class sizes and teacher workload, since 2013. Several leaves of absence from USQ were granted

between 2013 and 2018, as I had little time to work on the thesis because of work commitments during that period. Between 2013 and 2016, I alternated between spending one semester a year working on the thesis, and requesting a leave of absence for the subsequent semester. In the semester in which I worked on the thesis, I would refine my analysis and write up of the themes that emerged from coding the interview transcripts, or read literature on these themes. I was granted a leave of absence for both semesters of 2017 after outlining my work commitments and my upcoming sabbatical in 2018.

While the thesis was on hiatus, several studies came out on native English-speaking teachers in Japan and South Korea, which have benefitted the writing of this thesis (Alpaugh, 2015; Copland, Garton, et al., 2016; DeChamplain, 2017; Ford, 2012; Gilman, 2016; Horiguchi, Imoto, & Poole, 2015; Joun, 2015; Rivers, 2016; Rivers & Ross, 2013; Tsutsumi, 2013; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014; Whitsed & Volet, 2013). The long break, especially the year off in 2017, also meant that the thesis has taken on a different form from the way it was originally envisioned. The long break ended up helping the thesis by giving me time to reflect on the themes that arose from the teachers' stories and to develop a more mature and nuanced understanding of their life stories. Moving from South Korea to Mexico also gave me the distance I needed to reflect upon my experiences in Korea, and understand the unspoken assumptions that underlay my writing and, with the help of clever questioning by my supervisor, make these assumptions explicit in this thesis.

3.8 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research project methodology. A questionnaire was used to locate NES EFL teachers who met the criteria for the study: that they had been teaching English for at least ten years, had worked in at least two different countries, and were available for face-to-face interviews. The questionnaire also gathered biographical data and information about the participants' work history, educational background, and beliefs about language learning and teaching: information that was used to reduce the length of subsequent interviews for the teachers who were interviewed. Eight long-term NES EFL teachers, four working in Japan, and four in South Korea, were interviewed. The interviews were transcribed and coded using grounded theory principles as outlined in Charmaz (2006). Narrative

inquiry informed and provided structure to the study, with coding succeeded by memo-writing to draw out the themes and clusters of themes that will be discussed in [Chapter 5](#), and re-reading and close listening aiding the discovery of the themes in individual teachers' life stories discussed in [Chapter 4](#). Narrative inquiry, as a form of qualitative research, accepts that subjectivity forms a part of the study, with the relationship between the researcher and interviewee among other subjective factors that can influence the stories told, and the truths revealed in the interview process. In parallel with the stories told by the teachers, come stories of my journey, as teacher, as researcher, as emic participant in the research. These stories, tracing my own constructions and conflicts with my identity: as a teacher living and working in a different country, as a peer to the teachers interviewed for the study, as interviewer and as researcher, appear in Reflections between the chapters. To counter some of the researcher bias, member checking was used. Teachers who were interviewed were given the opportunity to review the narrative of their life stories ([Chapter 4](#)), to check the credibility of the researcher's interpretations. Teachers who did not form part of the study read and gave feedback on [Chapter 4](#) and [Chapter 5](#), with the form their feedback took revealing the believability and the transferability of the narratives and narrative themes. The following chapter, [Chapter 4](#), *Life (hi)stories*, turns the teachers' stories of becoming teachers, teaching, and adapting to living in other countries and cultures into narratives of being and becoming.

Reflection R3: A tale of two interviews

The purpose of this reflection is to explain why my story does not appear alongside those of the other teachers, in [Chapter 4](#). The teachers interviewed were *people just like me* – long-term NES EFL teachers, working in South Korea, like me, or in Japan, people who had taught in two or more countries. My original plan was to be both researcher and participant in the study: to be interviewed by a work colleague, and analyse my story alongside those of the other teachers. Further to this goal, I was actually the third person interviewed – I was interviewed on the 4th of July 2011. However, that interview does not form part of the study, because Sheila, the work colleague who interviewed me,

interrupted me constantly, and kept trying to answer the questions based on her knowledge of me, and her assumptions of what I thought / felt. I think I should have chosen someone who did not know me well – perhaps one of the practice interviewees, who would have had the experience of being interviewed, and my approach to asking questions, to draw on. (Journal entry 18, 25 September 2011)

By asking someone else to interview me, I put myself into the same space as the teachers I interviewed: constrained to answer the questions the interviewer asked, able only to choose in how much detail I answered these questions (Anyan, 2014), responding, with no power to direct the interview in a particular way if the interviewer chose to interrupt or digress. Once Sheila chose to reply to each question with her own understanding of my life, my response choices were reduced to correcting her interpretations of me. Instead of being my stories, the stories I told were in response to the stories she was telling of me. As a result, there was little about my Korean workplaces or experiences in Korea, because Sheila was more interested in my time in Mexico. The questions were asked out of order, such that the first question, about my background, which formed a frame for all the interviews, was asked last, as part of a discussion about how Sheila felt that growing up in different cultures had influenced me. The vast differences between my interview and the others gave me no way of connecting it with the other interviews. I chose to be interviewed again, on the 10th of March 2012, in another attempt to include my story with the other teachers' stories, but decided, ultimately, that the teachers had had

only one chance to tell their stories, so it was unfair for me to have two. The other interviews had also been completed in August 2011, and I had finished my initial attempts at transcribing and coding these at the time of the second interview – this was another factor in my decision to not include my stories.

I include an excerpt from both interviews where I was the subject in Table R3.1, to show the difference between the data gathered in each, and the importance of the interviewer in shaping the version of self that is presented by the interviewee:

Table R3.1: Maria talks about why she became a teacher.

Sheila interviews Maria (4 July 2011):	Robin interviews Maria (10 March 2012):
<p>Sheila: Okay so before we go to your past, I'd like to start with why you became a teacher. Do you think that your past and your background determined your course?</p> <p>Maria: I don't know. I don't think so. I think - yeah I never had any plans to become a teacher. My plan was to well actually...</p> <p>Sheila (interrupting): I see that your undergraduate degree was in the Arts so t...</p> <p>Maria: Yeah, yeah yeah yeah</p> <p>Sheila (interrupting): So that's - that wasn't necessarily a track to teaching</p> <p>Maria: My - when I was doing my undergrad degree ...</p>	<p>Robin: Alright so why did you become a teacher?</p> <p>Maria: I became a teacher because I wanted to learn Spanish and it was the cheapest way of learning Spanish that I could think of. So I did CELTA in Perth in Western Australia and then I – I actually moved to the UK first on a working holidaymaker visa, and then I moved to Central America. So, my goal was to spend a year just learning Spanish and kind of teaching English, and then head back to Australia, and that was about 11 years ago.</p> <p>Robin: So at that point teaching wasn't really a – not really a goal, just more like a means to an end?</p> <p>Maria: The teaching was a means to learn Spanish, yes. Yeah. (laughs)</p>

In the first interview, Sheila does the exact opposite of what Seidman (2006) recommends: asking leading questions, and interrupting when I try to respond. This forces me to respond to her questions, and moves my answer from the reasons why I became a teacher, to a discussion of my undergraduate degree, Influenced by my frustration with that interview, I ended up interjecting less, and asking fewer clarification questions in the subsequent interviews I conducted, not wanting to force the teachers I interviewed to provide more detail than they were comfortable offering. The interview therefore influenced my interviewing style, by giving me an experiential look at how an interviewer can influence the stories the interviewees tell.

It influenced the writing of this thesis, because of my decision to not include my story among those of the other teachers'. Not including my story, based only on my responses in the interview, meant that I have been able to pick which facets of self to reveal in this thesis.

Chapter 4: Life (hi)stories

In previous chapters we have seen that identity is constructed through story (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), and people tell stories in such a way as to create meaning out of events in their life (Court, 2004; Kelchtermans, 1993). Lives are chaotic, and stories about lives can be chaotic too. Narratives are not as chaotic. Narratives offer fragmented views of selves, accessing only those parts of experience deemed necessary for the retelling of self in a particular time and space (Ochs & Capps, 1996). Narratives tell us “how life is perceived” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 3) rather than objectively reconstructing life. The narratives that appear in this chapter merge the researcher and the teacher (Seidman, 2006): the stories came from the teachers, but the frame in which they are embedded comes from my understanding of their stories and the sense they make of their lives. My aim was to preserve the authenticity of the teachers’ voices, and give an accurate rendering of their life stories, while simultaneously overtly drawing attention to the themes that appeared in their stories.

In this chapter, the stories teachers told in the interviews, their emotional journeys of becoming, are stitched into narratives of becoming and being teachers, and of living and working in other countries. I use ‘story’ to refer to what the teachers said in the interview and what they wrote in their questionnaire responses. I use ‘narrative’ to talk about the texts written here that interweave the stories from their interview and questionnaire with a discussion of the themes that arose in telling these stories. The chapter title plays on the notions of fact embedded in ‘history’ and fiction embedded in ‘story’, to acknowledge that the truths revealed in the teachers’ stories are *personal* narratives of being and becoming. To Chase (2005), there is ambiguity and overlap in the use of the terms ‘life history’ and ‘life story’, where the first can refer to an autobiographical narrative or to a biography, while the second can refer to the personal telling of an autobiographical narrative or to the telling of an incident in the person’s life. The ambiguity of ‘Life (hi)stories’ in the title acknowledges that all of these meanings are included in the narratives that appear in the subsequent pages. The narratives are written predominantly in the past tense, to reflect both that the events that the teachers recounted had happened in the past, and to reflect that these were the teachers’ perceptions, beliefs, and interpretations at a particular time in the

past²⁵. Before going on to tell narratives of each teacher, I start the chapter with an overview of the similarities in the teachers' teaching and life contexts.

4.1 What the teachers shared, and how they differed

There were many similarities between the teachers. As per the selection criteria, all were native English speakers (Arielle and Lackey from Britain, Simon and Zahava from Canada, and James, John, Gabriel and Beth from the USA), had taught for at least ten years, and had worked in at least two different countries. All eight were employed full time at universities. (Gabriel mentions teaching at other workplaces outside of his twelve hours of contracted work, but this is by choice.) Therefore, they all had only one primary workplace. All worked in classrooms that were well equipped, with projectors, audio and video equipment, and computers for the teachers to use in class, as well as boards. They used this equipment to facilitate teaching. Zahava spoke of bringing videos downloaded from youtube into the classroom for students to work with. Lackey took advantage of the projector and computer to project a scanned version of the textbook page onto the board, which facilitated answer checking.

Simon and Zahava held tenured positions at their workplace, while Arielle had worked for over ten years at her university. All the teachers were active members of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) or Korea TESOL (KOTESOL), teacher professional development organisations in Japan and South Korea respectively. The teachers in this study did not have to work at different workplaces to make enough money to live²⁶. Work conditions allowed teachers enough time to take part in professional development activities²⁷.

²⁵ In support of the idea that the teacher's interpretation of their lives and work was time bound, one of the teachers, after reading an earlier version of his story as it appears in this chapter, confirmed that I had his permission to use his story in this thesis, and thanked me for 'letting (him) read Simon's story.' Referring to himself using the pseudonym showed that he too saw a distance between the self that participated in the interview and his current identity.

²⁶ Whitsed and Volet's (2013) EFL teachers in Japan have to work at more than one workplace to make ends meet

²⁷ Gabriel mentions that his contract is for twelve hours. Private language institute (hagwon) jobs in Korea usually put teachers on 30 hour a week contracts (Alpaugh, 2015; Cho, 2012), while Whitsed and Volet's (2013) teachers in Japan had to work at more than one workplace, which cuts down on their free time. My first contract in Korea was for 30 teaching hours a week, while at my second university, my full time workload was 12 hours a

There were also some differences between the four teachers in South Korea and the four teachers working in Japan, most notably in age range, and teaching experience in different countries. The four teachers in Japan had been teaching in Japan for longer than the four teachers in South Korea had taught in South Korea (see Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 below). However, although the teachers in Japan had been teaching English for a longer period of time than the teachers working in South Korea, the majority of their teaching experience was in Japan. In the survey, the four teachers working in Japan all indicated that they planned to spend the rest of their lives in Japan. As such, their investment in remaining in Japan was much greater than that of the teachers in South Korea, none of whom indicated plans to stay in the country long term.

The number of countries the teachers had taught in was more or less equal, with seven of the eight teachers having taught in two or three countries. James was the only outlier here, having taught in more than five countries.

Another difference between the teachers in South Korea and the teachers in Japan was in terms of age: all four teachers in Japan were in their 40s, but only two of the teachers in South Korea were in the same age group, with the other two in their 30s. The age difference might indicate differences in the life stages the teachers were passing through.

Table 4.1: Time spent teaching and countries taught in.

	Time in the country (years)	Years teaching	Number of countries taught in	Age
Teachers working in Japan				
Arielle	24	25+	2	45-50
John	7 (Japan) 5 (Korea)	13+	3	40-44
Simon	15	22	3	40-44
Zahava	15	19	2	45-50
Teachers working in South Korea				
Beth	3.5	19	2	40-44
Gabriel	6 (Korea) 3 (Japan)	9	2	30-34

week.

	Time in the country (years)	Years teaching	Number of countries taught in	Age
James	2.5+	12+	5+	45-50
Lackey	4.5	10	3	35-39
Maria	6	10+	4	35-39

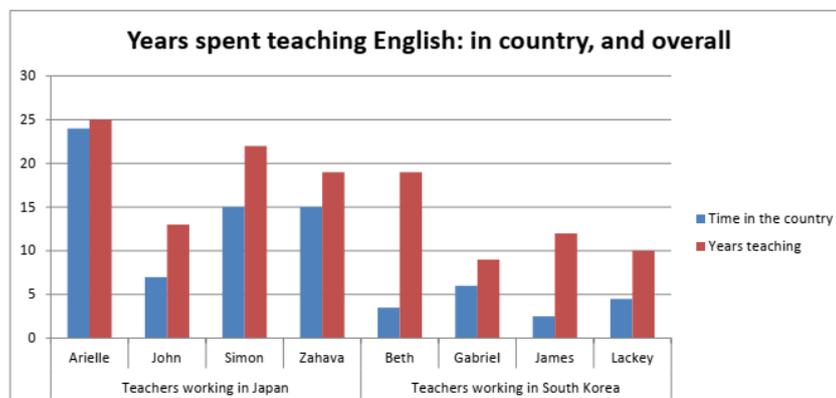


Figure 4.1: Years spent teaching: overall, and in the country where they currently work

4.2 From questionnaire data and story to narrative

A qualitative thesis is (often) a writing journey (odyssey) which only takes shape at its end (Meloy, 2002). The narratives that appear in the subsequent pages underwent various iterations on their journey to their present form. After transcribing the interviews and coding the interview data, I wrote a short, one-paragraph summary of who the interviewees were. These summaries were to sit in the middle of the thesis and serve as a reference point for the reader. Holistic discussion (Josselson, 2011) of the teachers' stories was divided into three sections: what the teachers had written in response to the questionnaire, what they had said in the interview, and a summary and discussion of the themes in each teacher's stories. Examples of these three texts appear in [Appendix J](#). In addition to these three sections, I had also double-framed each narrative: first with the story of why I had contacted the teacher to arrange for an interview, and then with a summary of the location and circumstances of the interview. Thus, each teacher's life story was divided into:

1. A one-paragraph 'summary' of the teacher.

2. The story of why the teacher was contacted.
3. A summary of the events that preceded the interview.
4. The narrative of what the teacher had written in response to the questionnaire.
5. A narrative of the teacher's life, based on the interview.
6. A discussion of the themes that appeared in the teacher's stories (questionnaire and interview).

I realized that I was chopping the teachers' lives into many segments in a misguided attempt to 'arrive at truth.' I was trying to quantify qualitative data. I turned to other narrative inquiry theses (Dickinson, 2012; He, 1998; Makris, 2012; Mitchell, 2011; Nones-Austria, 2011; Nugent, 2007) to see how other researchers had resolved the problem of turning the stories they had collected into narratives. In reading their theses, I saw that there was no one correct way to write a narrative inquiry thesis, and was able to better understand what *I* wanted to do and write the narratives that appear in the following pages. The narratives that appear here use the information that the teachers provided in the questionnaire to supplement or clarify what they said in the interview. The discussion of the themes is blended into each narrative.

4.2 Arielle²⁸

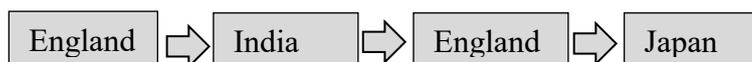


Figure 4.2: Arielle's moves from country to country

Arielle comes from a small town in England, and grew up in a rural area. She was between 45 and 50 years of age when she was interviewed, and had been living and working in Japan for over 24 years. She assumed that she would be in Japan "probably until retirement," living there with her Japanese husband and child. In addition to Japan, she had also taught for very brief lengths of time in England (a summer job, and during teacher training) and in India (as a volunteer). (Arielle's moves between countries appear in Figure 4.2.) Her undergraduate degree was in English literature, and she had also completed a TEFL/TESL certificate course and a Master of Education degree.

²⁸ [See Appendix E1 for [Arielle's questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with Arielle.](#)]

She had only good things to say about her schooling, describing the schools as “very good” and the teachers as “incredible” and “excellent.” The teachers who influenced her the most: three English teachers and a Biology teacher, infected their students with their passion for their subject, their ability to articulate their ideas, and their rapport with their students – and Arielle drew a clear link between the teachers who influenced her and what she aspires to as a teacher:

Which are probably three things I think are important about teaching when I come to think of that.

Encounters with different cultures (India, for her gap year, and Japan, to work for a year) formed important turning points in Arielle’s narrative, leading her to change her plans, and to new understandings of the world. She framed the first of these turning points as a story about privilege and opportunity. Aged 18, she went to India for a year, during her gap year, to teach as a volunteer at an experimental school. For the first time in her life, she was faced with the idea of education as a privilege, which led her to understanding its importance. She contrasted the unnoted privilege she had experienced in being able to take education for granted in her life, and that of the children she was teaching in India, who were willing to make sacrifices for those same educational opportunities:

it was something that everybody had in England but in India I realised ... especially for girls - how important education is

(the philosophy of the school in India) was based on the whole idea of free school: you don’t have to be there if you don’t want to be, but obviously for those children it was a great opportunity - they all wanted to be there.

Language was foregrounded for her in India, as well, and she linked it to multiculturalism and ethnicity in noting the contrast between the multilingual students, and her monolingual, homogenous background:

the children’s mother tongue and the state tongue was different so they already had to learn two languages, right, but also, in the classroom, English was used and they also learnt Sanskrit and Hindi if they wanted to, so it was just amazing

and there's me coming from (name of place) in England where everybody is white and everybody speaks one language

Language was highlighted again later in the interview, when she mentioned that she had studied a second language in school, but stated that she was bad at learning languages. Though she had learnt to speak Japanese well enough to cope with most everyday situations, and communicated with her family in Japanese, she specified that it was only the spoken language where she was proficient; she still needed to improve her reading and writing skills. The experience of having learnt another language was key to her understanding of teaching the English language: it helped her understand her students' "struggle" to learn, and empathise with their insecurities, while also giving her insight into the differences between the two languages and how these might cause problems for the students.

After her gap year in India, Arielle returned to the UK to do a degree in English, and then the PGCE for ESL/EFL, to teach at high school. Her plan was to teach ESL, and she had a job teaching ESL to Bangladeshi children in the UK, but teaching English in Japan for a year gave her the opportunity to meet three desires: to pay off her college loan, to save money to return to India, and to work in a public school. After seeing jobs in Japan advertised at the university where she had studied, she moved to Japan to teach with the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program.

At the time of the interview, she had worked several jobs in Japan – first as an assistant language teacher with the JET program²⁹, at a senior high school, then full or part time at private language schools and universities, moving between cities because of her Japanese husband's job, until she got a job working at a private high school in the city where she now lives, which, eventually, led to the full time university job she has now held for over ten years.

Arielle's story of her work history in Japan merged three themes: the need for financial security, the need for job satisfaction, and the compromises that are made to maintain a relationship (relationship-driven decision-making). The desire for financial security led her to Japan, as the pay for a year's work with the JET program

²⁹ Assistant language teachers (ALTs) team teach with Japanese English teachers, or teach full time in Japanese schools. (L.-Y. Wang & Lin, 2013). Applicants need to have a Bachelor's degree, in any field, an interest in Japan and its culture, and be under 40 years of age, but do not need to have any teaching qualifications (L.-Y. Wang & Lin, 2013).

promised to pay off her college loan and finance her return to India. In Japan, she talked about quitting jobs that she found frustrating, or working part time, or not working, mentioning that the moves from place to place were “because of (her) husband’s job.” Implicit in her story was the knowledge that she had been able to quit jobs she didn’t like because there was already one income in the family, her husband’s, which made it easier for her to focus on job satisfaction. However, not being the primary wage earner also had disadvantages, such as having to leave jobs she loved when her husband’s job required them to move.

I found a very good full time job in another private conversation school ... And then we moved to (the city where she currently lives)

Arielle was already planning to become an English language teacher, teaching ESL in England, when she moved to Japan. She had qualified to teach ESL / EFL in high schools in the UK before she moved to Japan. She talked about developing a more nuanced and deeper understanding of both herself and her beliefs, and of her cultural context: she had learnt to follow her own interests, but also adapt to the cultural context and accept that there were more ways of doing things than she was taught.

I’m less scornful of the Japanese way of teaching than I used to be. I realize that you can’t just bring one cultural educational pedagogy and plonk it on some other system

Cultural knowledge gained over time spent teaching in Japan had led Arielle to become “less didactic” and “mellower” in her beliefs on acceptable ways to teach and learn.

I’m not trying to force students to do things which they might not be comfortable with just because it’s my language theory

Her acceptance of the role of culture in language learning showed in the evolution of her attitude to the use of Japanese in the classroom: over time, she moved from having been taught to use a bilingual system; to not using Japanese at all in the classroom; to using it for rapport, in order to make students more comfortable in class; until now, when she found herself using it to make explanations in class, or to translate.

Arielle described herself as a “learning facilitator.” She projected the self-awareness she had gained through learning other languages and about other cultures onto the

students, wanting to think that she helped them learn three things: English, how to learn, and about themselves “because I know I learn a lot about myself by learning about other languages and other cultures.”

When interviewed, Arielle was undergoing an identity crisis, struggling to reconcile who she was perceived to be, by others, with who she felt herself to be. She saw herself as Japanese, but was regarded as a foreigner in Japan, while she felt foreign in Britain. She used the word “home” to express the feelings of belonging, and not fitting in:

I have lived outside of Britain for so long, when I go back there, I don't really feel at home ... here I feel normal and at home but everybody sees a foreigner

I go to Australia and the weird thing is, everybody thinks I'm Australian, right, and I feel completely foreign

Arielle talked about her identity crisis as a crisis of belonging. To her, identity was bound up with nationality – British Arielle was seen by Australians as Australian, and belonging in that country. She felt herself to be Japanese, and belonging there, but was regarded as a foreigner, or as “American” by Japanese people.

Living and working in other countries had changed Arielle's life physically, emotionally, and morally. It had “broadened (Arielle's) horizons” and made her “better, stronger,” “more patient,” “more observant,” and “more careful.” She had learnt flexibility and acceptance of difference: While she missed being able to speak English, living and working in another country had given her a broader viewpoint, “enabling me to view issues from different cultural perspectives.”

4.3 Beth³⁰



Figure 4.3: Beth’s moves from country to country

Beth was between 45 and 50 years of age at the time of the interview. She is American, and grew up in a large multicultural city in the USA. She described her ethnic background as “white American (Irish and Russian/Jewish descent).” Her undergraduate degree was in Women’s Studies, and she had also completed a Master of Education degree. She had taught English in two countries: the USA and South Korea (Figure 4.3).

Two teachers influenced Beth in high school. The first was an English teacher who “assumed the best” of the students, taking them seriously and getting them engaged in learning and having intellectual debates. The second was a Social Studies teacher, who had travelled (“He was like basically a 60s product you know: he backpacked around India and the whole thing”), was “vivid” – passionate about his subject, and introduced the world, and different perspectives of it, to his sheltered students “in a way that got me thinking.”

A major theme in Beth’s story was the search for financial stability. Her job history both before and after she started teaching English in the USA was marked by redundancies, underemployment, and the search for work that would help her make ends meet. The need for financial security led her to accept a job offer in Korea:

the primary factor was financial

it was an economic decision - (pause) the job market at home wasn't good and I had been either out of work, or under employed, or about to lose my job so many times in recent years, I got frustrated and decided I had to make a radical change

Lack of other employment options had also started Beth teaching ESL, sixteen years earlier. She had worked in social services and in publishing before she started teaching English, and became an English teacher “by accident” after she lost her job in publishing.

³⁰ [See Appendix E2 for [Beth’s questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with Beth.](#)]

there was a recession going on ... I was looking for work and the place where I very first started teaching ... hired people who weren't trained teachers if they were college graduates ... and had studied another language as well, and then they did on the job training

She was taught to use the audiolingual method at that first teaching job, which didn't impress her, but, while trying to follow a method she called "horrible," she discovered a passion and a talent for teaching, and stayed in the field. Beth's passion for teaching stemmed from forming connections with her students. She told story after story about interactions with students which revealed how important these connections were to her.

that's the thing that keeps me going about teaching, it absolutely is, the students' response, their gratitude

(on Korean students) I've gotten really positive feedback recently from students here who tend to say things like "wow I never felt comfortable with the teacher who is friendly and nice to us before."

(on teaching in the US) one student, this middle-aged Russian guy ... came up to me after and ... he said, "Miss, please stay, you are artist"

Beth accepted that differences existed between cultures, but the stories she told of difference were told to show her subversion of these, and her belief in an essential universalism of feeling that transcended culture. When she was teaching in the US, she was told that the Russian immigrant students demanded "authoritative teaching" and would not respect friendly young female teachers. She started the semester acting serious, but "it just didn't last because it's not me" and her students preferred the friendly, relaxed self she settled into. To describe her teaching self, Beth went immediately to her Korean students, who talked about feeling comfortable because of her friendliness and because she treated them well. She put this into a cultural perspective, stating that, culturally, Korean "teachers (were) more at a distance," and the system was more hierarchical, but it "(broke) (her) heart" to think that the students were afraid of their teachers and hadn't experienced nurturing teachers. *The* principle that underpinned her teaching was "empowering the learners." This meant being aware of why they needed to use English, so that she could help them achieve their goals and reach their potential.

Time spent teaching had reduced Beth's fear and nerves in front of the classroom, increased her confidence, taught her to evaluate teaching situations and given her tools to come up with solutions to problems. She displayed a belief in self-directed professional development, referring to having taught herself more teaching techniques, and observed "lots of other kinds of teaching," to understand what was wrong with the audiolingual method she was first taught to use, and to come up with ways to help her students. She offered no specific teaching tips or tricks, other than the skills that came with experience: to be able to "critically analyse" the method in use, to see what worked and what didn't, and to come up with the right method for the situation.

In teaching EFL, Beth felt like a cultural ambassador, having to explain cultural references when showing her Korean students American TV programs, and having to "back up and slow down" to pace the class for the students, who were less exposed to English passively. She also noted that the students in Korea lacked the strong intrinsic motivation that her adult immigrant students in the US had had to learn English.

Beth had predominantly taught adult students. Her jobs in the US were influenced by funding received from charities working with refugees or from government grants to retrain workers for new careers.

*that's all money from a couple of charities that want to do refugee
resettlement*

*there would be some government money for short-term programs to
get them retrained*

*for the 9/11 fund I was supervising a group of teachers and training
them*

Beth's story showed the importance of money from governmental or non-governmental organisations to fund English classes for immigrants and refugees to the USA, and the underemployment problems ESL teachers in the US can face. Teaching work was dependent on organisations receiving funds to help a particular group but, when the project stopped, or time limits were reached, the funding dried up, and she would have to look for another project.

Beth differed from the other teachers interviewed in that the majority of her teaching experience was in ESL, not in EFL. Though she had taught English for approximately sixteen years, all but four years of that experience was in the US. Her ESL experiences were both as a teacher and as an administrator “running programs, supervising teachers, and stuff like that.” In her four years in South Korea, she had taught at two different universities. At the first university, she taught intensive English training programs for in-service teachers. The classes focused both on teaching English, and on teaching how to teach English. The programs were new, and were being changed constantly, which caused her to feel a lot of stress, so she resigned to move to a university in the capital, Seoul, where she worked with undergraduate students in the English language and literature department. She said she loved working at the university: she was able to teach a wide range of subjects, it was the first time she had taught undergraduates, and she loved the experience.

I had a very positive experience, a very positive experience at (the university in Seoul). I taught, as I mentioned, presentation, English debate, cinema, business English, practical writing. I did an advanced Conversation class with some Grad students, and I did a TOEIC writing class – I think that’s it. It was a lot.

I interviewed Beth a week before she left South Korea to return to the US, so I asked her why, given her positive experience at this university, she had decided to leave. She had many reasons for leaving: missing friends and family, and not earning enough to fly home sufficiently frequently to see them, not speaking Korean well, a lack of knowledge of Korean culture, and her vegetarianism (“it was very challenging here to eat the way I want to”). In addition, Beth was single, and found that being single at her age isolated her and made her “invisible.”

I figured if I ever want to date again, I probably should go elsewhere.

Cultural norms meant that it was common for Western men to date and marry Korean women, but Korean men did not date Western women, she had noted. Her story illustrated the cultural dissonances that can lead a person to leave EFL, and relationship-driven decision-making.

Living in another country was character-building and eye-opening, providing opportunities for growth. Living and working in Korea had made her stronger, and

made her feel that she could take on other challenges. It had “broadened (her) horizons”: not only by introducing her to foreigners from other countries, and giving her access to stories of teaching in different countries and cultures, but, more particularly, by cutting through the barriers that would have prevented her from meeting Americans from different social groups and parts of the country, and introducing her to Americans she would not have met living in America.

Her time in Korea also revealed the dissonances that language learning can cause to a person’s identity. While she had studied Spanish in secondary school and in university, and described herself as a “competent” Spanish speaker, and had also studied Hebrew, French and Russian in the USA, these did not impinge on her identity as much as her inability to learn Korean, in Korea, contributed to her feeling isolated from Koreans, and judged by them. Beth tried, unsuccessfully, to learn Korean three times. She stopped attending classes the first two times because of her heavy teaching workload, and, the third time, because she went to hospital for surgery. She said she had learnt “survival” Korean – to ask for prices, to give directions, but had also discovered that there was no need for her to speak Korean in a big city like Seoul. Not speaking Korean made her life in Korea more difficult and isolating, and also made her feel like “an ugly American,” expecting that the rest of the world would speak her language. Speaking the local language was important for the personal and social life of an EFL teacher, to help them “connect” with the people from that country, and so that the people there did not form a negative impression of the foreigners.

4.4 Gabriel³¹

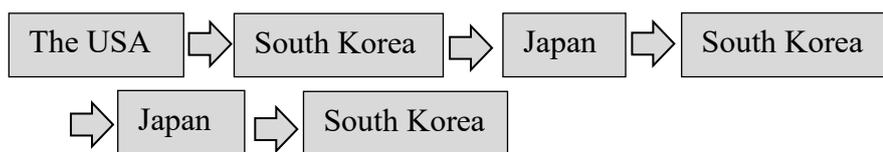


Figure 4.4: Gabriel’s moves from country to country

Gabriel was the youngest of the teachers interviewed, aged between 30 and 34 years of age. He is American, and described his ethnicity as “White.” He had taught English for more than ten years, in Japan and South Korea (Figure 4.4). When interviewed, he had worked in Korea for six years, and planned to stay in Korea for at least a couple of years more. His undergraduate degree was in History. He had also completed CELTA and an MATESOL degree.

Gabriel is from a small town in the USA.

I grew up in a small town, I lived there till I was 18, dare I say typical suburban American kind of thing

The first theme in his story was that of needing to escape from small town life. Moving to Spain for a semester, to study abroad, while he was at university, was a revelation to him, filling him with the desire to travel. He became an EFL teacher because he wanted to see the world, with the plan of working in “five countries in five years” and then returning to the US. His first job was in a small city in South Korea – and he moved on from there because of his desire to live someplace bigger. As part of this drive to escape from small town life, among other places in Japan and South Korea, he had lived and worked in both Tokyo and Seoul.

He was a “poor” student in high school, uninterested in school and focused on “do(ing) (his) own thing.” The only teacher he recalls from high school “sucked the joy out of” Maths for him by ignoring the students, writing on the board, and not explaining what he was doing or how the students could get there: “there was no scaffolding.” As a result of his indifference to school, his grades were “horrible” and he made the pragmatic decision to choose Education as his major so as to get into university:

³¹ [See Appendix E3 for [Gabriel’s questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with Gabriel](#).]

typically, men don't apply to study Education ... so, I thought if I listed as Education, then I'll surely be accepted, and that was true

Gabriel decided to become a teacher not only to facilitate his desire to travel, but also to pay off debts. He portrayed his entry into teaching as both deliberate and accidental. The deliberation came about in his choice of Education as a major, to be able to get into university. He changed majors to History within six months. What was accidental was taking a class on teaching TESOL towards the end of his degree, loving it, and writing a thesis on teaching English to Spanish students. Again, while looking for a permanent job, he was convinced by a colleague to teach English in Korea. The move to Korea was meant to be temporary, to facilitate his desire to travel, and to pay off debts:

my plan was five countries in five years – and then I'll get serious about whatever and then Law School will still be there if I so choose

His desire, initially, was to not be tied to a job or place. He wanted to be job free. This showed in the decisions he made – to take a year off to travel after teaching in Korea for a few years, and then to shuffle between jobs, and between countries. For three years, Gabriel alternated between semester-long contract teaching jobs at universities in Japan, and teaching at summer and winter camps³² in Korea. He decided to return permanently to Korea, motivated by a relationship, and because he felt a special connection to Korea:

Korea has a special place in my heart, like it's the first place I really lived you know, so I really like Japan, I think it's extremely pleasant, but Korea kind of has a special feeling for me - kind of jeong kind of thing. It's like no, I just feel more comfortable in Korea than I do in Japan, although, in Japan, I don't know, I feel like more of a guest or something

Contrasting with his need to not be tied down to a job or a place were the parallel stories Gabriel told of staying in the first city he worked in in Korea for a year longer

³² Summer and winter camps are short (usually three week long) intensive English courses for secondary school students. Teachers and students all stay in the dormitories of a university campus together, and classes are held for at least six hours a day. In addition to classes, students also participate in various activities e.g. they put on a play. From personal experience teaching at a summer camp, teachers get one day off in the three weeks. As all meals are supplied, and accommodation paid for, teachers can save all the money they are paid.

than he planned to because of the woman he was dating, and, later, of moving to Korea because of a relationship. His decisions were driven by relationship considerations, with his willingness to commit to relationships winning the fight over his need to not be committed to a job or a place.

It took him several years to realize that teaching had become his profession: he did CELTA during the year he took off from teaching (he continued to teach camps during that year, so returned regularly to Korea), then started a Master's degree about eight years after he'd started teaching:

I started to get really serious about teaching around that time, I guess

Realizing how serious he was about teaching acted as a catalyst: he became assistant director at his workplace at the same time as he was doing the Master's degree, then accepted a teacher training job, which led him to discover a passion for teacher training. At the time of the interview, he worked as an EFL teacher and as a teacher trainer simultaneously, travelling regularly between the two jobs, which were in different cities in Korea³³.

That Gabriel was a lifelong learner showed in his offhand references to completing a TEFL certificate, a Master's degree and a teacher training course. His studies, and the taking on of new EFL-related challenges: teaching in *hagwons*, teaching university classes, teacher training, trainer training, running an interpretation workshop, writing about teaching, and editing a magazine about it, showed an interest in ongoing professional and personal development. Teaching Conversation classes, the staple of university NES EFL teachers in Korea, had become a salaried job that gave him the opportunity to work on his other jobs in his free time. The wide range of teaching situations he had worked in show the breadth of opportunities for EFL teachers in Korea.

His teaching principles were "eclectic." "We have to own the choices that we make," he said. A teacher's past experiences, beliefs, and teaching contexts determined what they learnt, and the teacher needed to accept the responsibility for the choices they then made in class. Experience had led him to become a more flexible teacher, more

³³ Distances are easily covered in Korea if the cities are serviced by KTX, the fast Korea train service. I spent weekends travelling regularly between Seoul and my city, on Kotesol business – the journey, one way, only took 2 and a half hours, though the two are at opposite ends of the country.

open to other points of view, and less dogmatic in his belief that communicative language teaching was superior to “the Asian cram-style education system.” He had learnt that the teaching context should determine his teaching approach.

What Gabriel found most challenging about living and working in another country was coping with different cultural expectations. He gave several examples from his time in Korea: the expectation that a foreign teacher trainer would be teaching the English *language*, instead of doing teacher training; the expectation that Korean public school teachers would call parents if the children miss class; the expectation that social invitations extended by (Korean) work colleagues would be accepted. However, though he had learnt to understand the cultural context underlying certain behaviours, his actions had not changed, as he put greater emphasis on his personal needs than on the needs and expectations of the local people. Though coping with different cultural expectations was a challenge, he also considered it a gift that he had received through living and working in other countries. The gift had made the reverse culture shock he felt upon going back home stronger, when he faced people from his home culture who were unable to enter imaginatively into other ways of seeing the world.

Though Gabriel was a language teacher, he had a pragmatic approach to language learning. He had learnt three languages: Spanish, Korean, and Japanese, only to the extent that he needed them. He had studied foreign languages in secondary school and at university. He described himself as speaking Spanish with an intermediate level of proficiency, and rated himself an “advanced beginner” in the Korean language. He had studied Korean in the past, and said he spoke it well enough for day-to-day interactions. Though he could “get by” in Korean, despite many years in Japan, his ability to speak Japanese was limited. He attributed this to the short term contracts he had worked in Japan, his lower motivation to learn, and the greater degree of ease he felt living and being in Korea. He did not think it necessary for a language teacher to speak the local language to teach well – although he accepted that speaking the local language would facilitate teaching. With language learning, to Gabriel, the most important thing for an EFL teacher was to have had language learning experiences – and to have reflected on these. “The experience of being in a place without a voice ... is very useful,” he said.

4.5 James³⁴

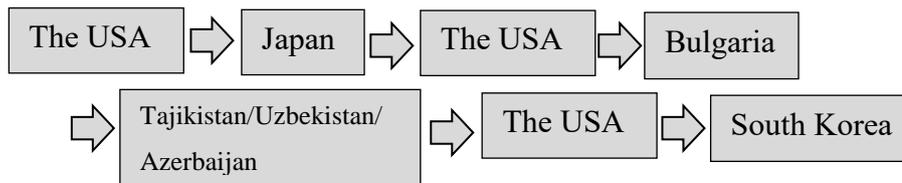


Figure 4.5: James’ moves from country to country

James was between 45 and 50 years of age, an American male who defined his ethnic background as “mostly Caucasian north American (wasp).” His undergraduate degree was in English literature, while his Master’s and doctoral degrees were in Education.

Though James had started studying Astronomy and Physics in university, his grades persuaded him to switch to English literature. After graduation, he got a teaching certificate, with the goal of teaching secondary school students. However, he had difficulty finding jobs – he explained this as the time of the “baby boomers’ boomlet,” where teachers were needed at the primary school level.

While he had planned to become a secondary school teacher in the US, James fell into teaching English in Japan because none of his other job applications received a response, and he was interviewed in person for the job in Japan. He offered other reasons for his decision: he also wanted to “(round) out his understanding of the world” by learning about the Asian context, and he had met Japanese exchange students when he was an undergraduate.

A recurrent theme in James’ stories was that of the traveller. James had “lived more places than you have fingers and toes” (Figure 4.5). He grew up in the United States, but he and his parents moved frequently from place to place around the US because of his father’s job. In recounting his background, he blended the moves with the family in with the moves once he was working as an English teacher.

we moved around a lot so I lived in Arizona, California and then kind of settled for junior high and high school in Texas before going to university in Arizona and then up to Washington state, and then to Japan and then back to Indiana, and then from Indiana I went to

³⁴ [See Appendix E4 for [James’ questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with James.](#)]

Bulgaria, and then from Bulgaria I went to Illinois, and then from Illinois I went to Tajikistan, and then from Tajikistan, I came back – no, that’s probably out of order, then back to Illinois and then Vermont and then after Vermont, we came to Korea. There’s probably some other stuff in there, like Japan and Kazakhstan or something – no, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan.

Moving constantly was part of his identity. He felt that living and working in other countries was so much a part of his life that maintaining his identity as an American, staying true to himself, was more important to him than assimilating into the local culture. Thus, James used the theme of travelling constantly to construct himself as the unchanging centre of his world, adaptable to new contexts, but simultaneously, true to his nationality and ideas of self. The constant moves when he was a child, he felt, blended with the moves as an adult, meant that he adapted easily to different situations, was better able to understand different cultural mores, and was better able to sound like a local when speaking the local language. He assimilated easily into different cultures because living and working in different countries “represents the character of who I am.”

He was in Japan for several years, teaching “a range from kindergarten to septuagenarians” and then taught in Bulgaria and Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan (he doesn’t remember the order in which the jobs occurred). The jobs in Eastern Europe and countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union were with USAID (“training people for study in the United States”) and the Soros Fund – teacher training and retraining. James’ story illustrated the importance of English, and the importance of the US economy, to other countries, because many of his jobs were part of governmental or private outreach efforts to other countries.

He described his time in Tajikistan as “life-changing.” Tajikistan was poor and had just come out of a civil war, so living there was far out of his experience.

we were repairing the furniture with just garbage (laughs) that you found on the street essentially, you know, firewood, kind of stuff (laughs) and this was at the (state) University

His memories of his time there came across as an adventure – he said that the life there had been more memorable than the teaching and felt that that expressed that he was more “committed to (his) life” than to his job.

James was an educator through and through. He was strongly focused on putting events in context – this formed another theme in his stories. He was widely read in the field of ELT and related his personal approaches and beliefs to research. Research had shown that more experienced teachers were stricter with themselves and with their expectations of students, he stated, adding that he had found that with himself. Students who had had problems understanding concepts when he had been in school with them, he related to literature he had since read on cognitive development, to understand and explain that they “couldn’t make the cognitive leap at that age.” His chameleon-like ability to sound like the locals in speaking the local language he attributed toward the critical period hypothesis and the adaptability he had had to learn when moving regularly as a child. He viewed events in the countries he had lived in through political, social, and cultural lenses, giving the social context for personal decisions. Of his time in Tajikistan, he explained that the country was moving from speaking Russian to Tajik, as ethnic Russians left the former Soviet republics, and explained the chaos this had caused, to explain his difficulties learning the languages. He located the importance of learning Korean or Japanese within their mono-ethnicity, and spoke of the colonial legacy that forced together multiple ethnicities into one country in other parts of the world.

With his experience of adjusting to different cultural contexts, and the depth of feeling James brought to considering himself adaptable and flexible, it was inevitable that he answer that the teaching trick he considered indispensable was listening: “you as a teacher listening to what your environment says.” This was also what he found admirable from his own days as a student: teachers who listened to the students’ needs and worked with them to help them meet their needs. Teaching needed to be learner-centred, and teachers needed to be both flexible and knowledgeable: in recognizing students’ needs, in having tools and tricks that they could use, and in knowing when to use which.

An EFL teacher needed to be aware of the context they were working in – the reasons the students were learning English, and to adapt to these. He gave examples from different contexts: from his Tajik students learning English “to get out of a

desperate situation,” to his Korean and Japanese students, who went to class only because it was mandatory, to other students studying English to meet personal goals. A teacher needed to be adept at conducting a “needs analysis” of their students’ needs. Specific to the Korean context, he thought that teachers had very different learning experiences to their students, and that the “vast majority of what gets taught in Korean universities doesn’t match what students need.”

James had moved to Korea for the sake of his family, so that his son could spend time with his Korean wife’s parents. This was, to him, “immeasurably” the best thing about living in Korea. He came across as detached from Korea, unwilling to engage too deeply with the country. He said that he did not need to learn the language because he worked in an “English ghetto” and his wife dealt with all other interactions with Koreans. The best thing about working in Korea was that he felt “competent” at performing his job requirements and knew that what he did was “in demand” in Korea. What he liked best about his current job was the “sense of contribution to a larger goal of improving cross-cultural communication.”

He spoke several languages other than English, rating them on the ACTFL OPI scale as “advanced low” in Japanese, “novice mid” in Korean, German and Spanish, and “novice low” in Bulgarian and Russian. However, he said he did not speak Korean well enough for day-to-day interactions. He had taken Korean lessons in the past , but no longer did, because of time constraints.

He did not think that his ideas about teaching had changed. He had moved away from the traditional approaches he was taught as a new teacher, but said he always “had an inkling” that these approaches did not fit with his beliefs. James’ words suggested strongly that he would support an instructional method based on Krashen’s natural approach:

Krashen’s natural approach never turned into an effective instructional method ... I guess I moved away from traditional approaches towards - even though the natural approach is something that ought to be traditional by now it’s not.

James identified isolation as the most challenging aspect to living overseas. He remembered the social isolation of living in a small town in Japan when he first started teaching, where every local knew who he was, even if they hadn’t met him,

because he was one of the few foreigners in town. He contrasted this with the English “ghettoes” city-dwelling EFL teachers can now live in: speaking English, with access to all the food they could get back home (“you can go to your Costco”) and able to see American movies, and with being able to interact online with people. But he added that new teachers could still experience “professional developmental isolation,” with no access to organisations like JALT or KOTESOL. This isolation did not affect him, however, as he had developed his own support networks.

4.6 John³⁵

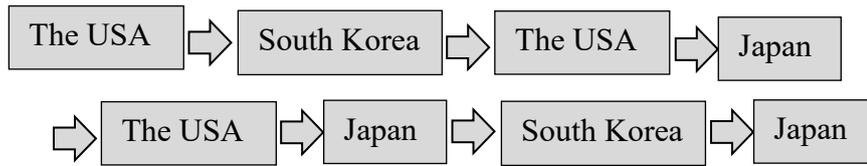


Figure 4.6: John’s moves from country to country

John was 40-44 years old, male, and American. He described his ethnic background as “Caucasian.” John’s undergraduate degree was in International Business. He had also completed an MATESOL.

John grew up in the USA. The first theme that appeared in his story was that of a need to go beyond the small town he grew up in. He wanted to see the world (“at an early age I pretty much divided the world map into two sections, Chattanooga, and better than Chattanooga.”), a desire which was met when he went to Germany as an exchange student. However, this only whetted his appetite for seeing the world. John was an indifferent student – “I was a loud kid,” he said, “but I wasn’t a real troublemaker,” who admired the passion and knowledgeability of his favourite teachers. After graduating from university, he spent a year looking unsuccessfully for work as an importer/exporter of goods, when he saw an ad for English teachers in Korea “by chance” and became an EFL teacher.

The driving forces behind his move into teaching EFL were financial – his inability to find a job in the US after graduation; cultural – a desire to see more of the world and, specifically, an interest in going to Japan fostered by the cultural milieu of the 1980s (“when I was coming of age, everything was about Japan”); and opportunistic – he figured that, as a native speaker of English, he would be able to teach it, and he would have time to work out what his future career would be while he worked. He highlighted the haphazard nature of hiring EFL teachers, because his interview focused on finding out where he would be willing to go rather than on whether he knew how to teach (“it was pretty much where do we send the ticket, kid”).

John had taught in both Korea (five years) and Japan (seven years), and said he planned to stay in Japan “as long as possible.” In addition to these two, he had also taught in the USA for a year and two months (Figure 4.6). He was able to put a

³⁵ [See Appendix E5 for [John’s questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with John.](#)]

positive spin on even the worst jobs he had had: a job at a profit-oriented language school in Japan that treated the teachers badly motivated him to do a Master's degree; an unchallenging job in South Korea, with unmotivated students, became a springboard for him and his wife to start giving presentations at conferences and to become IELTS examiners.

John felt a deep loyalty to good former workplaces, and to people he worked with. The connections he forged while working in Korea and Japan were very important to him.

at this point in my career, I would say the words, you'll never go to Japan again would rattle me a bit more

I used to have this vision, I want to go to all these different places, now I want to go back places ... If at any point you told me, you're not going back to one of these places, that would tear me up

With one job, at a college that closed its English program, he and his wife care so much for their former bosses that they have visited them every year, even when that meant flying to the country to do so. He would resign from whatever job he currently held, he said, to return to another workplace, if they required him.

The predominant theme of John's teaching life was that "the country will let you know when it's time." There was no point worrying about how long you would stay in a job: work conditions would get untenable as a sign that it was time to leave. As a result of his philosophy, John had a fairly relaxed attitude to finding work.

I don't really spend a lot of time thinking, 'I'll do this five years, I'll do this ten years.' As long as the cheques keep coming in, and the situation's agreeable, I don't worry about it.

For John, learning (and relearning) was a lifelong project. He talked about relearning things, and going to conferences such as KOTESOL in Korea and JALT in Japan to "swipe other people's ideas," or getting ideas from his wife. He brought a moral dimension to his teaching, saying that it had been good for him, because it forced him to go at the students' pace, rather than to follow his personal preference of rushing through things.

teaching's good for me ... (it) provides that opportunity to say, "You know I don't feel comfortable but this is what is required so I have to challenge myself and do it."

Teaching was a challenge, something that had helped him self-actualize.

So I think the profession's helped me be more self-aware, self-examining, self-critical and hopefully working towards being a better person.

The challenge in teaching also came from adapting to different work situations. Like most teachers who had worked in EFL for several years, John had taught a variety of levels and in a variety of work environments: with or without technology in the classroom, with books he didn't like, with students who came to class daily, or weekly, or were assigned a different teacher every time. This had taught him to be adaptable, and he was proud of his adaptability, recommending the development of that "good judgment" to other teachers.

what I pulled out of the institute scene is, I can work a damn long schedule with the most ridiculous, I mean, cartoonishly silly, you know, requests being put upon me, and make it work.

John saw himself as a coach, drilling his students and getting them to keep practicing. He had learnt, with experience, to view the students' lives holistically, to be "a little more realistic" about what he expected from them. This meant factoring in university students' travel time and their workload for their other subjects, or the job commitments an adult student also had to fulfil, to adjust his expectations of how much they could accomplish outside of class. He also used his own experience of studying Japanese to adjust his expectations of students. How long an assignment would take him, how much he would be able to study in an hour, and how many times he has had to look up the meaning of a word he already knew but had forgotten, were pointers as to how much he could expect of students.

John had studied foreign languages in secondary school and at university, and had also taken private classes. In addition, he had studied at language schools in Germany and Japan. He rated his speaking abilities in Japanese and German as "low-intermediate." He also spoke beginner level Spanish. Regarding the Japanese language, he said that he spoke it well enough for day-to-day interactions, and was

studying it alone, and occasionally asking Japanese people for help. He felt that the easiest way to learn another language was by using it as much as possible.

He never learnt to speak Korean fluently. He puts this down to the difference between the countries: there was little need for him to learn Korean, plus his work hours and conditions, and the lack of language learning books when he first moved to Korea made it difficult for him to learn Korean, whereas cultural factors made him unwilling to learn Korean the last time he was there.

I get to Korea, and it's just like, "Oh you gotta drop the nationalism, drop ... these other conspiracies, theories that pass as common knowledge over there--the rudeness, the people breaking in front of you in line, pushing, the spitting inside of buildings, the public urination, the national inability to drive, it's all of it is just like, "Man, get it together, and then I'll learn your language."

He felt that the difference between foreigners in Japan learning Japanese, and those in Korea generally not learning Korean came down to feeling that there was something to admire in Japan:

you come to Japan and you think to yourself, 'you know, the US could learn something from this.' ... this many thank yous and excuse mes is healthy for people. Putting your head down, valuing getting along more than being right, the friendliness, the orderliness, I mean there's stuff to really admire

"It's not gonna hurt" to learn the language of the country an EFL teacher lived in, said John. But learning about the culture was more important – reading books about the country gave him insight into the culture and a framework for interactions with the students. Learning a foreign language was important because it helped the teacher put themselves in the students' shoes, and thus better understand the students' learning process.

The most challenging aspect of living and working in a country depended on the country. He was very accepting of the cultural differences with Japan, and found the country admirable. Korea was more difficult for him to adjust to: he had felt that he was becoming racist in Korea. Having left Korea only six months before the interview, John was still "shell shocked" and had many negative stories to recount

about living there. He gave example of the many negative experiences he had had while teaching university students: students lying and expecting the teacher to accommodate their lies, staff members lying because they didn't want to fulfil their obligations, colleagues not being given their severance pay when they leave, Koreans stealing their friends' money, 'membership training,' where students were forced to drink, even if they didn't want to

it's just a mean damn system – there is a mean streak in that country.

... I made out pretty well because ... I learned a way to work the system.

So it's like, if you're ready to be a son of a bitch every day, you can get on fine, but if you just want to get along with people, get ready to be a human punching bag, you know.

The only regrets John had about teaching EFL were that he hadn't started teaching English even earlier, and "be(en) more consistent" at it. He compared his life to the life he would have had if he had stayed in America: he had had many more experiences and "eaten food I never would have heard of." He loved the quality of life he had as an EFL teacher in Korea and Japan: the long vacations, the "greatest" students, the ability to commute by bicycle instead of by car.

4.7 Lackey³⁶

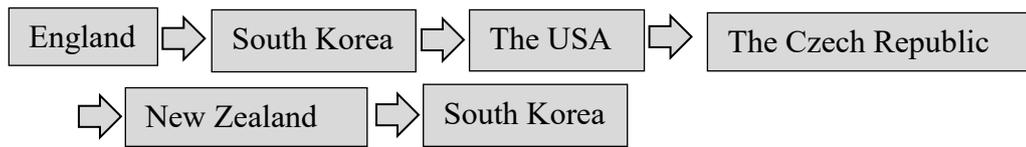


Figure 4.7: Lackey’s moves from country to country

Lackey was between 35-39 years of age, male, and English. He described his ethnic background as “White.” His undergraduate degree was in Business. He had also completed CELTA and a Master of Education degree. He had studied French in secondary school, but described himself as an English language monolingual.

Lackey was born in Gibraltar, where his father had been working. When he was six months old, his family returned to England, which is where he grew up. He went to a public³⁷ boarding school from the ages of 11 to 18, when he finished his A levels. Two teachers influenced him positively in his high school days, the first because he was “super-organised, super-knowledgeable and just really, really helpful” and the second because he was passionate about his subject area. Meanness was the character trait he remembers about teachers who made a negative impression. His French teacher made fun of the students who had problems with the language. Perhaps because of this, Lackey considered himself to be a poor language learner – mentioning this more than once in the interview.

Lackey worked at a school in New Zealand during his gap year “just as kind of a general dogsbody” and found the experience life changing, but then studied Business in university and worked in a couple of businesses. His entry into teaching was planned, but not by him: he and his wife had been running a ski chalet in France, to “get out of the rat race,” his wife had done a TESOL course earlier, and she found them jobs teaching English at a *hagwon* in South Korea. They didn’t enjoy the school so “did a midnight run” (left the school and the country without giving notice), had a holiday, and then found jobs teaching in the Czech Republic. After just over a year working in the Czech Republic (“we actually had to leave because we were having a bit too much fun”), they moved to New Zealand, where they worked for four years,

³⁶ [See Appendix E6 for [Lackey’s questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with Lackey.](#)]

³⁷ ‘Public’ schools in the UK are formerly exclusive, fee-charging private schools (The Blogger, 2009; The Good Schools Guide, n.d.).

before returning to Korea, to teach at universities there (Figure 4.7). They had been in Korea for four and a half years at the time of the interview.

The main theme in Lackey's narrative was that of teamwork. Lackey and his wife took turns choosing jobs ("she found a job for us in Korea," "I'd been keen to get back ... so we took the jobs in New Zealand"), chose to work together at the same workplace time after time, and chose countries to work in based on their children's needs. After leaving New Zealand, they were offered four jobs: in Kuwait ("good money," but "not ... necessarily a nice place for the kids"), in Indonesia ("a good program," but not a safe country, in his wife's opinion), back in New Zealand, and in Korea, which they deemed the safest and best option for the family.

As is evident from the move to Korea, Lackey's decisions were relationship-driven, and motivated by what was best (and safest) for his children. Financial security and quality of life ranked equally importantly: accepting the university job in Korea meant both, which the job offers in Kuwait and Indonesia could not guarantee, while, earlier, in New Zealand, Lackey mentioned pay cut after pay cut, and working longer hours and opening his own business to try to make ends meet in a worsening financial climate. This led him and his wife to eventually decide to leave New Zealand.

Another theme in Lackey's story was the need to take on a variety of teaching challenges. He enjoyed teaching different courses in the Czech Republic ("you were never teaching the same thing on the same day"), and also completed CELTA while he worked there. He also enjoyed taking on new challenges in New Zealand ("doing EAP, doing IELTS ..., working as a head teacher there, different levels") and loved the challenge of designing and running a teacher training course in Korea after several years of teaching undemanding Conversation classes.

Respect for students was one of the principles that underlay his teaching. "I like to be at their level and ... feeling like we're working together towards them learning." He set clear boundaries, but saw himself as adaptable and flexible within these. He respected the decisions his students made, especially students' decisions to participate or not in the class, working with the students who wanted to work. Respect, to him, meant changing the planned class activities if the students had a genuine reason to not want to do something. This contrasted with the frustrated acceptance he felt in Korea with administrative interference in teaching

it was conversation class but we weren't allowed to have a speaking element in the placement test, which didn't make a lot of sense to me

The frustration also expressed itself in his choice of alias for the study: Low-level Lackey. He said he had “more empathy for immigrant workers” after his teaching experiences.

Lackey's retelling of his life story was embedded in sociocultural context: getting hired by a computer firm the same day the company announced layoffs around the world, and linking his financial problems and decision to leave New Zealand to the rise of the NZ dollar and the corresponding shortage in Chinese students heading to the country. His teaching, in Korea, was also embedded in his understanding of Korean culture. For example, he assigned groupwork, with group scores, because the emphasis on the in-group in Korean culture meant that all the students in the group would practice. Similarly, he adjusted his teaching during university festival week³⁸ to enable students to participate in the festival, and complete work for their English class, and sleep.

The strong links between language and culture, and the need for the teacher to “bridge (the) cultural gap” made it important for the NES EFL teacher to learn the local language. Having said this, Lackey admitted to not speaking Korean well, giving various reasons for this: (1) He and his wife had to look after their sons. (2) They were not sure how much longer they would stay in Korea. (3) He was “not a strong language learner.” He converted this last into a positive: being a bad language learner made him better able to recognise and respect the effort his students were putting into learning English.

Lackey had become less “militant” about not using the L1 in the classroom since moving from ESL to EFL. Different countries and different teaching contexts had taught him adaptability and flexibility, both at work and in general. Every country had cultural “pitfalls” – even other English-speaking countries like New Zealand. The most challenging thing about living and working in another country was trying

³⁸ During a university's Festival Week, the students are expected to man stalls that sell food and drinks all night long. They drink a lot, and come to class hungover, drunk, or sleepy. Even though they might not have slept, students are also expected to attend English classes during the day – teachers are not allowed to cancel classes. (Both Lackey and I had had the same experiences of Festival Week at university.)

not to offend people, while it was important to learn about the people that were significant in the history of that culture and country.

4.8 Simon³⁹



Figure 4.8: Simon’s moves from country to country

Simon was between 40 and 44 years old, male, and Canadian. He described his ethnic background as “Scots/Irish Canadian.” His undergraduate degree was in Biochemistry. He had also completed a Bachelor of Education degree, a TEFL/TESL certificate course, a Master of Education degree, and an MA in Applied Linguistics.

Simon was born and grew up outside a small university town on the east coast of Canada. He moved with his family when he was 7 or 8 years old to the capital city of the province, which was where he went to school and university. He didn’t remember much about his school days, he said, because he was allergic to a type of food, and didn’t discover this till he was 13.

I just thought I wasn’t terribly bright (laughs) but when I stopped eating (that food), suddenly I could see, I could hear, I could think, I could do all those things. So I have very few memories of school as a child.

The teacher who made the greatest impression on him was a History teacher, because he was “interesting, and he was funny, and he challenged us.”

Simon started the interview by saying that he had always known he was going to be a teacher. He completed an Education degree after finishing his first degree in Biochemistry, and started teaching science in high school. Teaching was a graduate degree in those days, and, when Simon graduated, he was much younger than the normal graduate age, so he felt he “(had) a few years to play with” and got a job teaching science at an immersion high school in Turkey. Working in Turkey got him interested in language learning. He decided that he was still too young to teach science in Canada, so interviewed for a job at a language school in Japan, was hired, and moved there with the plan of staying for two years (Figure 4.8). EFL was going to be a stopgap measure, and a digression from his “real career” as a science teacher.

³⁹ [See Appendix E7 for [Simon’s questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with Simon.](#)]

Simon taught in Japan for a couple of years, moving from teaching to management and teacher training, and then moved back to Canada to manage an office his school had opened in his hometown. Frustrated with the shift from teaching to management and administration, dissatisfied with the regular promotions that took him further and further away from teaching, Simon resigned, and returned to Japan, also to be with the woman he is now married to, with whom he had worked in Canada.

She decided to come home - she's from (Japan), so I followed her - she calls me her international stalker. She left, and about six months later, I came here and I gave up that sort of whole business aspect of life and just said, "I'm going back to the classroom."

A criticism levelled at EFL teaching, as an explanation for why teachers leave, is that there is no upward trajectory for EFL teachers (Phillips, 1989). Simon's story showed someone who had been offered that upward career path, ultimately rejecting it, to return to the classroom. When discussing his time as a manager and administrator in Canada, he talked about a clash of values between Canadian (teacher) and Japanese (office) work ethics. The business, profit-driven ethics of the company clashed with the "hippie-ish" "cultural sharing" ideals of the Canadian teachers who worked there.

He returned to Japan, to "a really bad job" in a "dingy" "horrible" office. However, the job paid the bills while he studied for a double Education/Linguistics Master's degree. The degree proved to be a stepping stone to the tenured university teaching job he held when interviewed. Married, with a tenured job, with permanent residency in Japan, Simon had put down roots, and could not imagine leaving Japan.

I'm married, we bought a house, we just planted a tree - I have to take care of that, I can't leave now!

Though Simon had chosen to make his life in Japan, and did not see himself returning to Canada, he nonetheless, placed himself squarely within a tradition of diaspora from his part of Canada. People from his economically depressed part of the country left home so regularly to find work that they spoke of "going down the road" when they spoke of leaving. He had just gone just a bit further "down the road" than others.

The main theme in Simon's story, which he himself identified, was his search for stability and abhorrence of ambiguity, both in the workplace and in living in another country. When I interviewed him, he had reached that point of stability that he had been working toward, and was not sure what he was going to do next. Ambiguity has been a constant problem in his EFL career. "I don't deal well with uncertainty," he said, so the two years in Turkey had been frustrating because schedules weren't adhered to, and power relationships between people were ambiguous. Adjusting to Japan had also taken him time, to learn his place at work, with his wife's family, and to understand the culture and his place in it. Another source of ambiguity were the vague guidelines for courses that he was given at work: through trial and error he had learnt to set course criteria that would give his students "an appropriate level of challenge".

Simon stated that his job as an educator was to focus on the students' language skills and intellectual development, not on their social or emotional development. His job was to enable students to achieve, and to *feel* that they achieved something, and that the class was worth doing. Thus, it was indispensable that teachers adapted quickly to their students' capabilities.

Time spent teaching had increased his expertise and "(rounded) out (his) bag of tricks." The earlier science teacher, focused on "transmission" and passing on the correct answer had given way to person who was able to use different tools to approach different students. He showed self-directed professional development – and the influence of his science background, in building, testing, and proving a hypothesis, and incorporating successful hypotheses into his teaching, and thus building his bank of teaching skills. When he first realized that he lacked the appropriate knowledge, he said, he had looked for a book on different teaching techniques, then worked his way through it, trying the techniques with his students, to build a bank of techniques he was comfortable using and that the students accepted. This approach has also helped him to design sufficiently challenging courses for his university students. Thus, the change in his teaching had come over time, with age and greater experience, not from country to country.

He compared his current self with an imagined stay-at-home-self to talk about the opportunities for personal growth that living in other countries had given him. Living and working in other countries had changed "everything" about Simon. Had he

stayed home, he would probably have gotten a job, built a house, and been content with his life. He “probably never would’ve gone to graduate school .” Through living in other countries, he had become “more open-minded,” “more flexible,” “more tolerant of ambiguity,” better able to read and interpret body language, and “more ambitious.” He had achieved more than he would have, had he stayed home.

Simon spoke Japanese, and lived in Japanese. Learning the language was not a choice: he had never lived in “the foreigner bubble,” and had needed to communicate in Japanese while working as an administrator and manager. He thought it was “extremely important” for EFL teachers to learn the language of the country in which they lived, so as to be able to understand their students’ and colleagues’ cultural context, and to be regarded as professionals at work. Understanding Japanese helped him understand problems his students were experiencing in class, and work out ways to modify his teaching to help them overcome these problems – while not *speaking* it in class meant that students were forced to use English.

4.9 Zahava⁴⁰

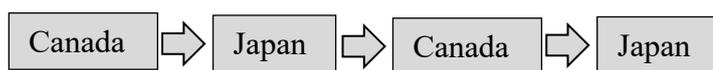


Figure 4.9: Zahava’s moves from country to country

Zahava was between 45 and 50 years of age, female, and Canadian. She described her ethnic background as “Jewish.” She had been teaching in Japan for 15 years, and planned to stay in Japan “forever” (Figure 4.9). Her undergraduate degree was in Communications and German. She had also completed a TEFL/TESL certificate course, a Master of Education degree and a PhD in Linguistics.

Zahava grew up in Canada. She was shy and bullied in primary school, and felt alienated in high school. She remembered two English teachers best of her school days. The first taught her how to write a five paragraph essay – this one lesson was so memorable, she has never forgotten it. The second loved her subject, and brought that passion to the classroom, making it fun and inspirational. She encouraged Zahava to extend herself, to “colour outside the lines.”

Zahava had planned to become a journalist, but decided to go to a different university to her high school classmates, to avoid them and to “restart (her) life.” She completed an undergraduate degree in Communications and German, then moved to another city (“actually I was running away from a bad break up”), and found work as a secretary at a university education department. It was then, looking at thesis titles, that she realized that she might have a future in teaching. Other events in her life crystallized to add to this realization: She had tutored English literature students in the past, and they’d told her she explained things better than their professor. She had a cousin who worked in Japan, who had encouraged her to move there, telling her it would “change her life.” All these moments led her to decide to be an ESL teacher.

She did a TESL certificate, and then an MA (“I was a bit scared of the real world so I decided to go to grad school”). Then she started teaching in Canada, and realized that teaching allowed her to “be myself more.”

Her students were from a Japanese university, and she was hired by that university to teach in Japan. Her first experience of another culture sent her into shock: her

⁴⁰ [See Appendix E8 for [Zahava’s questionnaire responses](#) and [a transcript of the interview with Zahava.](#)]

students were scared of her, the silence in the classroom was “jarring,” and she didn’t try to learn Japanese - she “was refusing to do anything to integrate.” Adjusting to life in Japan was about making connections for Zahava: life improved when she met her now husband, a student in one of her adult night classes.

Until she met her husband, Zahava’s story had a theme of not fitting in - of avoidance or escapism. This pattern disappeared from her narrative the moment they met. From the moment she stepped into the classroom, the escapism narrative was replaced by that of having found her calling. In fact, she described finding her calling twice: upon first stepping into a classroom in Canada, and then, a few years later, at a different institution in Canada:

(The second time she found her calling) I thought, “okay.” You know, I had found my calling. I love teaching - I love what I do - I love preparing lessons, I love creating, I love interacting with the students.

She moved, with her husband-to-be, back to Canada, to work there for four years. When she returned to Japan with her husband, she tried teaching private classes in rural Japan, but had a lot of problems: the students didn’t want to pay, she couldn’t charge as much as she would normally charge because she was in the country, students cancelled without notice and she didn’t feel respected. She was depressed. Her husband then found her a teaching job she loved, in another city, and they lived apart for three years, so that she could work there. Her desire for a permanent job led her to start studying for a doctorate. She was offered the position at her current university (a tenured, full time position) when she was close to finishing the doctorate, and liked knowing that she could stay at the university for life. Zahava lived in Japan because of her family, and stated that the best thing about living there was earning enough to support her family.

Zahava saw herself as a facilitator in the classroom. She described this as giving the students “freedom and boundaries”: she set up an activity, told the students what was expected of them, then waited to see what the students did, finding that they always “amaze(d)” her. She had grown from over-preparing, to being able to teach a more flexible, stronger class with a lot less planning.

Zahava spoke Japanese – she had studied it because she wanted to be independent. However, she considered herself “still illiterate in some sense,” because her reading

skills were weak. She thought it was very important for EFL teachers to learn the language of the country they lived in, for three reasons. The first was cultural: to be able to understand how people thought. The second reason she gave was intercultural: to be able to help the students understand differences of meaning and nuance between the two languages. The third reason was pragmatic, and rooted in meeting students' needs: to help them correct mistakes.

Her answer to the question of how living and working in another country had changed her was very powerful:

To be honest, I think I was sleepwalking through life before I came to Japan. I woke up and found I could create my own life in my own way. I can be myself in a way I can't really in my own country.

Japan taught her to “prepare food,” compromise and share with other people, live in harmony, and be responsible. Living in Japan had changed her perspective, making her judge her home country through the cultural lens of her time in Japan. While she considered that Canada was also her home, she did not wish to visit for more than three weeks because she could not cope with the differences between her life in Japan and her life in Canada. While life in Canada was more relaxed and less rule-bound, and there was a greater variety of food, it was simultaneously

too easy, and I find people are lazy, and people are, they drive everywhere, they have no self-discipline, they disgust me (laughs), they're dirty.

A strong theme in Zahava's story was her need for connection: she felt alienated in her first experience in Japan because of the lack of connection she felt with her students; she began to integrate once she met her partner, she felt rejected when private students cancelled classes, she enjoyed having the students at a previous workplace come to her to talk about their problems. Teaching for Zahava was all about forming connections with her students, and being able to help them. When she formed this connection, she loved her job, when she felt disconnected from the students, she got depressed.

The connections were not just with students: what she missed most about Canada was that “it (was) easy to become friends and communicate with others.” Language and culture were the most challenging aspects of living in another country, for

Zahava. The two were interrelated: she did not speak Japanese well enough, and she didn't fully understand the university system in Japan: both how to negotiate it as a teacher, and why students studied the majors they studied. She gave an example of the cultural misconceptions that could cause problems for NES EFL teachers in Japan: Foreign teachers assumed that students were studying a particular major because of a desire to do so. In reality, Japanese students chose a university, and then chose the major that would allow them to study at the university of their choice.

4.10 Summary

In this chapter, I recounted the stories the teachers told in the interviews. These stories were about their background, their own experiences as students, their entry into teaching, and the experiences they had had as ESL and EFL teachers. The teachers talked about the challenges of living and working in other countries, intertwining these stories with stories of learning the local language and adapting to different cultural norms. In their stories, they intertwined themes dealing with identity, language, and culture, in talking about teaching EFL. Several shared themes and preoccupations emerged from the stories. These themes will be discussed in the following chapter.

Reflection R4: A letter to John

This is a letter to John that I never sent. I never sent it because of my desire to keep a distance between the real human being I interviewed, and the stories he told in the interview. Sending the letter to John would have started a conversation between us, and I did not want that. Yet the interview with John marked a turning point in my life.

This was a story I had to tell – it has existed, in various iterations and formats, in almost every version of the thesis. So, when I talked myself into including it, I had to understand why it was so important to me. Why did I have to include it? Yes, it marked a turning point in my life. Equally importantly, it shows the reflexive nature of the interviewing process – the feedback loop that is created between the interviewee’s stories and the researcher’s memories. When John told his story, his story became part of my life story. In sharing his story – and, now, in sharing mine, we share realities, worldviews, and what is important to us – what these stories have taught us. We enter into – and can change - each other’s realities.

I’m sorry, John. I’m writing to apologise. I’d like to apologise for never telling you how important the interview with you was, for me. At the time of the interview, you were finishing your first semester back in Japan, after a few years in South Korea. I was in Japan to interview you, and three others, and, incidentally, to make some decisions about my life. I was trying to decide whether or not to resign from my job, and to leave Korea. I had been in Korea for almost six years, and at my workplace for five. I had a great job, a great lifestyle – and I was fighting the knowledge that it was time to go. The issues I had with Korea were minor – hassles with (in my opinion) ill-thought-out administrative decisions, a dissatisfaction with the sameness of my life and routines, a fear that I would turn into one of the many disillusioned, burnt out English teachers I saw, who hated the country, and hated themselves for not leaving, but felt trapped by the great pay and work conditions. Then, fairly early in our interview, I asked you about your future plans, and you said:

Early on in my career I noticed that English teachers...spend a lot of time talking about ... how long they should stay and all this sort of

stuff, but I figured out that ... you don't really have to worry about that, the country will let you know when it's time.

Those words – “the country will let you know when it's time” – haunted me then, and stay with me now. Staying in Korea was the pragmatic decision, the sensible decision. There were dreams I couldn't fulfil in Korea – the dream of a house of my own, a garden, dogs. But set against those were the dreams I had fulfilled: completing my Master's degree, paying off my home loan and building up savings, working as an editor, presenting at conferences, travelling around Europe and Asia.

“The country will let you know when it's time,” I heard, as I tried to convince myself to stay in Korea. Then, four days after returning to Korea, an administrative decision was implemented at work that I disagreed with, and I typed up my resignation letter and sent it immediately, and felt ... relieved instead of stressed out. I didn't know where the cats and I were going to go, but we were going to leave our safe haven in Korea and move. Perhaps I would have made that decision anyway – but I think that interview was a catalyst. If I had not heard you articulate your “shell-shocked” feelings about Korea, if I had not heard you say, pragmatically, that “the country would let (me) know,” I might have stayed – or stayed longer - in Korea. So I have to apologize, for not telling you then, or later – until now, in fact, how important that interview was for me. You (that interview) changed my life.

Chapter 5: Resonances and reflections

[Chapter 4](#) presented the life stories the teachers told in the interviews. I drew out themes and patterns in the stories while presenting these. The teachers' stories shared several themes, such as thriving on the challenges of teaching in different contexts, and adapting to different cultures and cultural expectations, reacting to being seen as *Other*, adjusting to learning different languages, and reacting with shock upon returning to the home country. These themes shared a common denominator: me, the researcher. In listening to the eight teachers speaking, in transcribing and then coding the interviews, and freewriting on the themes that emerged from the coding, I ended up with eight voices speaking in my head, interacting with each other, and with my own stories of teaching and adapting to living in different countries. The stories began to resonate within me, growing stronger as I reflected upon them. Reflection is central to the narrative inquiry process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), with the researcher reflecting on the stories they heard, and then reflecting the understanding and knowledge gained in this process out to the world. In Figure 5.1, I present an image of a singing bowl, being sounded, to reflect the sound of the stories resonating within me. This chapter presents these resonances, the complementary stories told by the teachers, that grouped themselves around specific themes as I reflected upon them. These resonances are divided into two broad groups: Teachers talking about teaching, and Teachers talking about living in other countries. Two poems, titled Resonance 1: Expanding horizons, and Resonance 2: A complete change, where the teachers' own voices tell their stories of becoming EFL teachers, and of how living and working in other countries has changed them, are included.



Figure 5.1: A singing bowl, being sounded

5.1 Teachers talking about teaching

The teachers' stories about teaching touched on several themes that resonated across the interviews. The stories focused on culture shock and resistance to the different cultural context upon first entering it. Once they adjusted to the new context, the teachers thrived, and particularly enjoyed the variety of teaching opportunities in the EFL field. As they grew in teaching experience, they grew in confidence, and their teaching plans became looser and less rigidly defined, while their expectations of students and classroom behaviour grew stricter. In describing their teaching selves, the teachers consciously or unconsciously linked to the qualities they admired in the teachers who had taught them. Teachers also preferred to view their role as that of the 'guide on the side,' helping the students achieve their personal learning goals. A dichotomy was set up between caring NES EFL teachers and a profit-oriented or obstructive local administration. The teachers in this study were evenly divided between those that saw teaching as something that helped them be true to themselves, and those that saw teaching as an opportunity for personal growth.

5.1.1 The entry into teaching: determined marketing, deliberate yet accidental decision-making

Five of the eight teachers spoke of their entry in to English language teaching as the unplanned part of a planned move into a teaching career: Arielle, Zahava, Gabriel, Simon, and James had all decided to become teachers, and had, in four cases, finished their (teaching) studies *before* they started teaching EFL. Simon (high school science), James (secondary school English), and Arielle (ESL) trained to teach in the school systems in their countries. Zahava completed a Master's degree in language teaching, and Gabriel enrolled in university to do an Education degree (admittedly, in Gabriel's case, this was a pragmatic decision to get him entry into university - he changed his major to History six months later).

Chance entered the picture when, as recent graduates, the teachers were unable to find jobs in their chosen field, and saw or heard of opportunities to teach abroad. These opportunities came to them in a variety of ways: through word of mouth (Gabriel, Zahava, and Simon), newspaper advertisements (John), books about teaching (John, again, a couple of years later), and advertising on university job boards (Arielle, Zahava, James). Their stories here shed light on how intensively

schools in non-English-speaking countries looked for native English-speaking teachers (NESTs). The marketing shows the importance given to learning English – and having it taught by NESTs – particularly in Japan and Korea. In taking advantage of these teaching opportunities, the decision was presented as *time bound*: the teacher would work in the foreign country for a limited period of time, and then return to their ‘real’ life in their home country.

5.1.2 First EFL job was a shock (and not liked)

Moving to another country for the first time was a challenge for most of the teachers. With the exception of Lackey, all moved alone to the other country, so not only were they coping with a new culture, they were doing so without a support network of family and friends. Three of the teachers articulated why they found the move a challenge:

There was some resistance at first. Because I didn't like it. It was not Asia, and I felt very American.

said Arielle, talking about first moving to Japan⁴¹. She had been overseas before, having worked a gap year in India, but resented Japan for not being India.

Both Lackey and Zahava talked about being inexperienced and naive (being ‘green’) when they first moved to a country as different as South Korea (British Lackey) or Japan (Canadian Zahava) from their home countries:

Zahava: I was green, I didn't know what I was doing - I was shocked to encounter students who – the silence the resistance was, you know, jarring ... and I didn't really make an effort to learn Japanese then I was a bit pig-headed ... a lot of it was my fault too, I was just refusing to do anything to integrate

Lackey: I think one of the problems when we first came here was, we were just a little too green and Korea was so different for us that ... it was just too strange and too difficult for us to cope with

⁴¹ Note: (1) Arielle had worked for a year in India, as a volunteer at an experimental school. (2) People from the Indian subcontinent are known as ‘Asians’ in the UK, where Arielle is from. She is therefore using the word ‘Asia’ to refer to the Indian subcontinent, not to the entire continent, of which Japan is a part.

The teachers' first reaction was culture shock, expressed as a resistance to the differences, and a refusal to integrate into the new country. Beth and James also talked about the challenge that moving to a different country posed, but in more general terms. Beth did not explain why she found the move "challenging," while James generalized to the social isolation a teacher in a rural area feels in a different country, where the foreigner stands out and the whole town knows who you are:

The world is changed from when I first went out, ... you were still so isolated that people would come up to you and say, 'my friend saw you at the train station,' and it's like, 'does your friend know me?' but he said he saw this tall foreign person and it had to be you

To Arielle, Zahava and James, part of the shock came from standing out, from being different, from being *seen*. Arielle "(felt) American", as though she has taken on a national identity that was not hers, with the baggage that came from stereotypes about that nationality. James was known to everyone in his small community, even if he had never met them, so became aware of how efficiently small town gossip, especially when someone was foreign, worked. Zahava was surprised to find that the students were scared of her, rejecting her difference with their body language

I was the first foreigner many of them had met ... and when I would walk up to them in class, they would, their eyes would go wide and they'd sit back in their seats as far away from me as possible and I thought oh god I'm only 5'2" how come I'm not so scare- people, are you scared of me

For Simon, his first experience abroad was in Turkey, which was challenging because of his intolerance of ambiguity. Given this, he felt he stayed there too long:

It was okay for you know, the first six months or so, ... but I stayed there for two years, which was maybe about 18 months too long

To seven of the eight teachers, the problems arose from *life* in the country – only Zahava spoke about her issues with Japan in terms of the classroom. The teachers immediately foregrounded their *lives* and not their careers as the focus of their story. The stories teachers told focused on being looked at, being *seen*, being weighed or judged in different ways, and of the discomfort this caused.

5.1.3 The NES EFL teachers thrive on being jacks of all trades

Unlike the standard subject teaching for which half the teachers had trained, when the NES EFL teachers moved to another country, they were expected to teach students of different age ranges, in a range of different teaching situations. The teachers' accounts of their EFL teaching careers revealed the diversity in the EFL teaching field. While all the teachers were teaching at universities at the time of the interviews, they had taught both children and adults, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, in public institutions, and at private schools, and privately. The amount of time allocated to English classes varied in the workplaces: to daily, weekly, or more frequent classes. Course duration varied. The number of face-to-face teaching hours, with a particular group of students, or in a particular workplace, varied. Table 5.1 summarizes the levels the teachers had taught at, in different workplaces, during their teaching career. [In this, as with all subsequent summary tables in this chapter, I also include data on my own teaching experience. This data is included to show the similarities and differences in my teaching experiences to those of the other teachers.]

Table 5.1: Levels teachers had taught at⁴².

	Arielle	Beth	Gabriel	James	John	Lackey	Simon	Zahava	Maria
Primary education (includes kindergarten and primary school)				X					X
Secondary education (includes secondary and high school)	X				X		X		X
Adult classes		X		X				X	X
Private classes / own school						X		X	X
Private language school classes (teachers might teach children or adults)	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Summer and winter camps (short			X						X

⁴² Note: Teachers talked about teaching at these levels. The list might not be comprehensive, as they might not have mentioned some levels. In addition, levels have been conflated in this list, for example, Lackey mentioned teaching at private language institutes in the Czech Republic, and John at private language institutes in Japan and Korea. The terms might not be totally equivalent: a private language institute in Korea caters primarily to school children but might offer a class for adults or for university students, while Lackey implied that his private language institute students in the Czech Republic were predominantly adults.

	Arielle	Beth	Gabriel	James	John	Lackey	Simon	Zahava	Maria
term intensive courses for school students)									
Tertiary level (includes technical colleges and universities)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Additionally, the interviews revealed that the subjects an EFL teacher was expected to teach also varied. EFL teaching as defined by the practices of the teachers in this study had many meanings. It was: (1) teaching the English language; (2) teaching test prep courses such as IELTS, the Cambridge suite (FCE, CAE), the ETS exams (TOEFL, TOEIC); (3) teaching EAP or ESP courses; (4) teacher training - teaching how to teach English, or teaching teachers of English; and/or (5) teaching ‘interpreting’ skills. Table 5.2 lists the different teaching situations teachers referred to when talking about teaching EFL.

Table 5.2: What teachers do when ‘teaching EFL.’

	Arielle	Beth	Gabriel	James⁴³	John	Lackey	Simon	Zahava	Maria
Teaching the English language	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Teaching test preparation courses		X			X	X			X
Teaching EAP ⁴⁴ or ESP ⁴⁵ courses		X					X	X	X
Training teachers		X	X			X			X
Teaching ‘interpreting’ skills			X						

‘Teaching EFL’ was a very broad description of what the teachers in South Korea do. Lackey met with his students three times a week, had flexibility in course design, and the liberty to teach “a variety of courses”. James predominantly worked as a teacher trainer and admitted that, “even when I get asked here to teach English classes in the

⁴³ James did not appear as a teacher trainer, because he stated clearly in the survey that he did not teach English, but, instead, taught teachers how to teach English. He, therefore, did make a distinction between teaching English and teacher training.

⁴⁴ English for Academic Purposes

⁴⁵ English for Specific Purposes

English program, the classes they ask me to teach are Applied Linguistics or ... Teaching English to Young Children”, so could not be said to be teaching EFL anymore. Gabriel’s job involved some teaching EFL, but was predominantly about running interpretation workshops. His job, in the workshops, was to listen to the simultaneous translations his students made to speeches in Korean that other classmates brought in and read, and to help the translating students improve their interpretations. Gabriel also worked as a teacher trainer. Beth taught in the English language and literature department, and her job involved helping the students to develop a range of skills, not just ‘Conversation.’ She had been teaching CNN Listening classes and Cinema English.

In Japan, again, the four teachers taught EFL, but EFL was defined broadly for Simon and Zahava. At their workplace, students had to take two years of compulsory English classes. There were seven compulsory classes in the first year. In the second year, students chose five electives (out of eleven). A third year of English classes, specializing in Business English, was also offered. This third year was elective. Teachers were free to design their own classes, and some classes for some degrees were taught in English, so the English teachers also offered a number of English for Academic Purposes classes, to prepare students for these. John mentioned that his university hired teachers for one year contracts, for a limit of five years (this limit was flexible – teachers could be rehired after taking a six month break from teaching at the university).

The EFL teachers came across as adaptable to a wide variety of teaching contexts – in fact, they thrive on the challenges of teaching in different contexts, and sought these out when they changed jobs. It could be said that the career ceiling that has been talked about in EFL (Johnston, 1997; Phillips, 1989) was ameliorated by sideways moves into different countries or different teaching contexts, meeting the challenges that these different contexts provide, and seeing these different contexts as an opportunity for personal and professional growth.

Lackey saw the different demands on the teacher as a challenge, to be enjoyed. Of the Czech Republic, he said:

I really really enjoyed being (at the language school) because ... you were never teaching the same thing on the same day, you know, you

might do a business course in the morning and, you know, some exam course in the afternoon

This characteristic, of enjoying challenges, was echoed when he talked about designing a teacher training course:

I got to kind of design the course and run the course with a group of teachers and it was a you know six month course with 30 teachers who you saw every day so that was really really good and really different

To John, the different expectations placed upon him became an opportunity for personal and professional growth:

I think to be really good, you just have to be one who can improvise you had to take whatever was thrown in front of you – that's - really what I pulled out of the institute scene is, I can work a damn long schedule with the most ridiculous I mean, cartoonishly silly, you know, requests being put upon me, and make it work

He took pride in knowing that he had the skills to meet any teaching challenge put to him.

The idea of EFL teaching as a space for personal and professional growth was reflected by Simon, who contrasted the lack of expectations and guidelines in his workplace in Japan, and the opportunities this had provided him, with his previous life as a science teacher in Canada. In Canada,

there wasn't a lot of thinking about what I needed to do next or where I was going to take students, or what I wanted students to do, because a lot of that was laid out for me

In Japan, having to set 'an appropriate level of challenge' had caused him difficulties, but was a skill he felt he had finally mastered – at least for his current workplace.

The exhilaration of personal and professional growth, while working collaboratively, came through when Gabriel talked about developing a teacher training course with another teacher, and then working with the teachers taking the course. Their questions gave him an opportunity to reflect on his own teaching, and to learn about himself.

I think it was memorable in that it was eye-opening – wow, look at all these choices that I'm making here that are available for scrutiny if someone chooses, and I'm welcoming these choices from the participants

The only time a job change was regarded as a negative was when it was linked to an identity the teacher had chosen to discard. For example, Simon decided to give up his life as a businessman, so expressed his discomfort at being in charge of the Business English classes at his university “because I used to be a businessman, in those air quotes,” making it clear that ‘being a businessman’ was an identity that was assigned to him, not one he wished to claim.

Another negative for Simon was the upward career path: moving from teaching into management and administration (and teacher training for a while too). He “felt trapped” into a cycle of constant promotions, moving him further away from the classroom, he stated, so he “gave up that sort of whole business aspect of life and just said, “I’m going back to the classroom.””⁴⁶

Teachers moved fluidly between teaching EFL and teaching ESL, with lifestyle choices determining these moves: the desire to study for a Master’s degree sent John back to the USA, and led to him teaching there for over a year, before he and his wife decided to look for jobs in Asia again. Love, and the need to make sure that her Japanese partner would adapt to Canada, led Zahava back to Canada for four years, before they returned to Japan. Beth started looking for jobs overseas because she needed to be fully employed, and to earn a living wage – and then returned to the US when she found a job that offered full time employment back home. Lackey and his wife followed both their hearts and the money to New Zealand, and then moved to Korea when the bottom dropped out of the EFL teaching market in New Zealand. Even though John, Beth, and Lackey talked of moving between EFL and ESL jobs, they invoked the same narrative of facilitating personal goals and desires that Zahava did.

⁴⁶ Like Simon, I too found the promotion from teacher to administrator deeply unsatisfying when I became one of two joint heads of department at my second university in Korea. I resigned as head of department to return to teaching full time, and would resist any attempt to name me head of department again. Like the teachers in this study, I prefer developing and implementing new courses, and teaching.

While long-term EFL teachers generally thrive on the challenges of taking on new roles, the teacher new to teaching EFL had problems with this. The majority of Beth's experience of teaching came from ESL, so she had problems with being asked to teach a level she had never taught, for teacher training course, and felt that she was 'faking' it, which led her to resign from the job (this is discussed in greater detail in the section titled 'The biggest source of stress in the workplace is the administration.')

What the other teachers regarded as latitude to develop classes, turned into a distressing and stress-inducing lack of direction for Beth, leading her to resign, to find a job better suited to her emotional and professional needs:

5.1.4 Experience led to greater adaptability, but also greater strictness

The biggest advantage long-term NES EFL teachers had over teachers who were starting out was experience. Experience in different contexts, in different countries, in different teaching situations (John "I've taught with a book, I've taught without"...), and with many different groups of students, gave them the flexibility to change their lesson plans and adapt to learners' needs. The teachers shared the idea that being adaptable and flexible – within boundaries - were the best tools teachers could bring to the classroom.

The most indispensable tools and tricks in the teachers' arsenals were more intangible: knowing their students' capabilities and being able to judge what you could ask them to do (Simon), being able to assess all aspects of the classroom situation – students' abilities and motivations/motivators, language level, the resources they have access to, the requirements of the situation, and create from this knowledge "whatever I need to create".

Gabriel focused on giving the learners time to think and prepare, before asking them to share. James and John and Beth backed this up, James saying that *listening* to the situation, the learners, their requirements, was the most indispensable tool, and John volunteering that he had learned to use good judgment through his various teaching situations.

The teachers set up parallels between past and present selves in describing their teaching journey. For Beth and Zahava (Table 5.3), the journey was an emotional one, from fear, to confidence in their own competence. They had learnt to believe in themselves, and in their ability to size up a situation and implement the appropriate

technique. With experience, they had greater self-confidence, as well as access to more teaching tools.

Table 5.3: From fear to confidence.

	The fearful beginner →	The confident expert
Beth	<i>I remember when I first started teaching I was always nervous, I was terrified</i>	<i>I don't feel like I know what the best method is even now... but ... I have the tools to critically analyse whatever method's being used and ... come up with what whatever method needs to be put into place in a situation</i>
Zahava	<i>I would over-prepare like crazy, I was scared to death</i>	<i>I'm not afraid to not be prepared ... And now I can prepare, I can have a loose idea of what I want to do... and my brain will come up with something, so, I think a lot less afraid, I don't have to plan so tightly as I used to, It's much quicker for me to plan</i>

For the other teachers (Table 5.4), the journey was a psychological one, from (trying to) blindly fulfil role expectations, to thinking critically about these, to developing their own beliefs, and the confidence to follow their own path. As inexperienced teachers, these teachers showed an uncritical acceptance of the rules they had been taught, and focused on implementing these rules in the classroom. With experience, they had learnt to take their own position on these rules:

Table 5.4: From uncritical acceptance to a more nuanced position.

	The uncritical beginner →	Forging their own path
Gabriel	<i>when I first started teaching, I read some books and heard some stuff about this thing called communicative language teaching it seemed to be what I was hired to do and the idea that ... it's your job to make up for eighteen years of deficient education</i>	<i>the biggest change is that now I'm - I think and hope and believe that I'm really focused on the context and what are we, why are we here, rather than just flying the banner of CLT without thinking it through</i>
Lackey	<i>I think I used to be quite militant about not using the first language in class</i>	<i>I chilled out about that a lot</i>
James	<i>I also had all of this stuff that I was told that I needed to do to teach</i>	<i>I guess I moved away from traditional approaches</i>

	The uncritical beginner →	Forging their own path
Simon	<i>I had sort of started my career as a what can I say – narrower - focus on the content, more of a transmission model of teaching, um, and when I switched from teaching content to teaching language I found I was still doing that</i>	<i>through that half year of exploring the methods, I sort of moved away from that teacher-fronted thing</i>
Arielle		<i>I've probably become less didactic, mellow</i>
John		<i>what's changed is trying to be a little more realistic about what it is I'm asking people to do</i>

Culture added an additional dimension to expertise when it came to teaching EFL: EFL teachers teach in different cultures, and have to adapt to greater cultural differences in the classroom. Lackey and John highlighted this when they talked about moving between workplaces in different countries. Lackey, used to dynamic interactive classes in New Zealand, and assuming university students would speak English fluently, was faced by students with different role expectations. His Korean students expected to be passive and to be dictated to, which meant that his active lesson plan, which required them to move around the classroom and interact, was too advanced for his students. John made the same mistake in moving from Korea to Japan: “you’re always teaching to the last workplace,” he said, having overloaded his highly motivated Japanese students – and, therefore, himself, with work, assuming they would be as little interested in learning English as his Korean students had been.

5.1.5 Inspired by passionate teachers, facilitating lives and learning, and coaching students

There were certain qualities that the teachers remembered about memorable teachers from their own school days. Memorable teachers inspired their students (Simon, Zahava). They were passionate about their subject (Arielle, Beth, John, Zahava); knowledgeable, and willing or eager to share this knowledge with their students (Arielle, Beth, Lackey, Zahava); good at keeping students engaged, and at challenging (Beth, Simon) the students. They were also willing to listen to the students and make time for them (James, Lackey). Bad teachers were equally

memorable, for all the wrong reasons. They were petty: memorable for being mean (Lackey), ridiculing the students (Lackey), and ignoring them to write on the board: unengaged with the students and unwilling or unable to explain (Gabriel). Arielle makes an explicit connection between who she is as a teacher with the qualities she admired about her favourite teachers, stating that the fact that they loved their subject, could explain well and had a good rapport with their students were “probably three things I think are important about teaching when I come to think of that.”

The teachers’ teaching identity was predicated on being the ‘guide on the side’. They saw themselves as facilitators and coaches, encouraging and motivating the students to achieve their personal goals.

I pull students ... I set out a challenge and ... invite them to step over the bar (Simon)

(flexible, humorous, engaged with the students) (Lackey)

Friendly and nice ...(and) nurturing (Beth)

I’m an English teacher... I would feel comfortable with coach (John)

More strict ... a facilitator (James)

I’m a teacher ... a learning facilitator (Arielle)

I guess facilitator...I give them freedom and boundaries ... and they always amaze me (Zahava)

Facilitator...coach...guide...depends on where I am, what I’m doing (Gabriel)

However, personal experience and personal truth imbued the shared terms ‘coach’ and ‘facilitator’ with different meanings for the teachers. To James, being a facilitator meant enabling/empowering the students to discover what they needed, and then how to get there. His focus was on student motivation and their life goals with language learning. Arielle picked up on this idea of ‘learning about themselves’, but was focused on the students learning the language and how to learn it. Zahava focused on herself as teacher, in setting up and structuring the activity, and making clear how it will be graded – giving students freedom within these parameters meant being a facilitator to her. Finally, Gabriel saw the definition as context dependent.

His job in class was to facilitate discussion – where he and the students worked together to arrive at an answer that was satisfactory to them. Thus, even a ‘common’ term such as ‘facilitator’ was interpreted via the lens of personal experience, and personal truth coloured it with different meanings.

Gabriel and John both used the word ‘coach’, but, again, it meant different things to each. Gabriel referred to his job in interpreter classes as coach, occasionally interjecting from the sidelines, or being there to answer student queries. John, on the other hand, used the metaphor of sport – he saw language learning as a physical skill, which required hands-on coaching, “giving them good practice and setups that they can just go over and pick it up”.

5.1.6 Caring for the students = empathizing, nurturing, empowering, subverting

The teachers’ loyalty was to the students, even if this meant subverting organisational or national ideas of the role of the NEST in the classroom, or of teaching.

Beth: students here who tend to say things like wow I never felt comfortable with the teacher who is friendly and nice to us before. (laughs) And I know there’s culture differences between Western and Asian styles and typically here teachers are more at a distance and there’s more of a hierarchical authority thing going on, and, on the one hand, it warms my heart like oh thanks I’m glad you like me and feel comfortable with me, and on the other it sort of breaks my heart you know because I think they’ve always been afraid of teachers you know like nobody’s ever been nurturing to them before? How sad is that?

Lackey: they (the university) had a festival couple of weeks after midterm ... and we’re not allowed to cancel the class ... so, I gave them (the students) some homework which was in place of one class, ... another (morning) I ... made up a treasure hunt

Lackey (explaining why he doesn’t force students to work): they’ve made a choice and I respect that choice, ...- they have to be in the class they have to learn English, and they don’t want to

Empowering the learners therefore meant subverting the stated goals of the country or of the institution in which they worked, where these goals focused solely on building students' English language competence. Lackey did this through respecting the students' wish to *not* learn, and giving them the space to *not* work, if they didn't want to. Beth's subversion was couched in terms of breaking the formal barrier between teacher and student that the culture insisted on, by caring for the students and being friendly.

The teachers saw their role as that of *empowering* the students. To Arielle, this was achieved through helping the students learn about themselves, and not just the language. To six of the teachers, empowerment meant putting all their abilities toward helping the students achieve their goals.

To help the students achieve their goals, it was important for the teacher to be knowledgeable about students' needs (James, John, Lackey, and Simon). This meant coming to grips with a new teaching context as soon as possible (John and Lackey told stories of the frustration felt by teacher and student alike when they 'teach to the last workplace'), or learning what one should expect of students (Simon talks about the frustration felt by both teacher and students when he set the students an unachievable goal: 'there's a sense of failure in the room and it's, it's just a horrible feeling'), so as to adapt the classes successfully to meet students' needs.

To understand students' needs, teachers also put themselves in the students' shoes: John thought of how much he would accomplish, given time constraints, when learning Japanese, and modified his expectations accordingly. Arielle and Lackey also reflected on their language learning experiences to empathize with the students' struggles to learn English. Beth revealed her nervousness and fear as a beginning teacher to students, to put them at ease.

5.1.7 The biggest source of stress in the workplace was the administration

Furthering their aim of serving the students' needs, while trying to maintain (their own idea of) professional standards, often put teachers at odds with the administration. This was the biggest source of stress – leading to frustration or conflict - in teacher narratives. Different workplace cultures and organisational goals led to conflicts, especially because of

(1) goals that were not clear – a lack of guidance as to what was expected of the course.

(2) a clash of values, with the teachers portraying the administrative staff in both countries as profit driven, clashing with caring teachers.

The teachers valued being given clear guidelines and knowing that the administration had clearly defined goals, but rarely received these. Not knowing what was expected of them caused stress. With Beth, who was new to teaching EFL, the stress of coping with constant and confusing changes in the instructions she was given for courses she was asked to create and teach caused her to leave her first university.

I taught a not-very-successful writing course with them ... I wasn't sure what the goals were - and that's one of the things I find frustrating when I'm in a job

I chose to leave because I found it too stressful to be honest ... the Korean government and whoever oversees this ... don't really know what they want to do yet I think, so there was a lot of last minute total change of direction and then last minute total change again, and so I didn't feel like I could do my best work, and so I chose to leave.

However, teachers who had spent more time teaching EFL were energized by the lack of guidelines and enjoyed being able to find their own pathways (Gabriel), or took advantage of the opportunity to set their own different goals until they arrived at one that worked (Simon).

Gabriel: it was hard cos we were reinventing the wheel because we didn't know what we were doing and we had no real guidance on anything, but it was still kind of it was enjoyable work and I loved it, it was just what I wanted to do

Simon: our curriculum is – the polite word for it is emergent. The not-so-polite word for it is non-existent. We're given very very broad guidelines –what the expectations for student performance are, and then we're sort of expected to fill it in.

Another problem was a clash of values, between a rigid and controlling administration (Japanese or Korean) and Western teachers who did not understand

these expectations, or had different expectations. John and Simon expressed this as a disconnect between an uncaring, profit driven company, versus caring teachers.

John was very bitter about a Japanese language school he worked at in the 1990s:

(The language school)... was very much a sales driven place. The people who got promoted were very much kiss up kick down types and it was all just about numbers and processing people through without much care for you know doing something good for students

Simon had also worked for a Japanese company, and had the same experiences of culture clashes between Western teachers and Japanese administrative staff. Reminiscing about his time working in Canada for a Japanese company, he said:

for the last year I was regional manager for a half a dozen schools ... there were lots of control issues ... it was a Japanese company that was run in a very particular sort of Japanese businessman kind of way but everyone who worked for the company was Canadian, and they chose this career path because they were interested in internationalization and international cultural sharing and those kinds of things but then they were working for a company that was very focused on the bottom line so there was a lot ... of communication issues and a lot of staff and company not sharing a common goal

Both John and Simon used an accounting and profit driven narrative to talk about the Japanese workplaces: *sales driven, numbers and processing people through, focused on the bottom line*, which contrasted with the emotional terms used with the Western teachers: *care, doing something good, interested in cultural sharing*. John also found the same problems in South Korea:

I just felt like the universities I worked in, the administrations were just staffed by anti-humanity or something you know (laughs), it's like they weren't really thinking about the kids

Beth was not as negative about the administration when she talked about the administration not being in touch with how English was taught, and programming large numbers of students in her Cinema English and CNN Listening classes, but was clear that here was a disconnect between administrative planning and the execution of the class:

whoever makes the decisions about these things may still have this idea that students sit and listen and memorise (laughs) and instead of the idea that you have interaction and production of language you know in a language classroom, but, aside from that, the large class – I had a very positive experience,

The stories of clashes with administration outweighed the stories of good relationships with staff, with the only positive note coming from John, who talked about a couple of good bosses, in Japan, who he was still in touch with

The junior college in (city), uh, if that boss called me tomorrow, I would work- I would work it out, I would get out there to him. I still see my two bosses from that job – about once a year ... that was just four wonderful years

5.1.8 Gaps in understanding cultural expectations caused misunderstandings

The teachers made it clear that sometimes the misunderstandings came from incomprehension on both sides. Teachers sometimes brought mistaken preconceptions to the teaching context, Zahava noted, which could foster misunderstanding. Coming from a culture where students chose their university studies based on personal preference, it had taken time with a ‘cultural informant’ – a colleague in her university – for her to understand that, in Japan, the students chose the school based on its ranking, and chose whichever subject that would allow them to get into in that school. Thus, the students

don't necessarily come to my school because they want to come to my school ...– the students want to go to ... the national one, so this is the safety school and then they get into any department they can get into, even if they don't want to study that subject.

Even when the teacher came to understand the local context and expectations, this did not always lead to behavioural changes in line with local expectations. Gabriel noted that two hour breaks in his work day were, to him, a time to do what he wanted to do, “but the expectation, the unstated expectation was, you should be in the office when you’re not teaching”. At first, he had acted in line with his own cultural understanding of a break being a break – with time, he understood the local cultural expectations, but still chose not to follow them.

5.1.9 The teacher is the person

There were two main narrative thrusts to the teachers' stories of teaching that could be summarized as (1) being true to oneself (Arielle, Beth, Gabriel, Lackey), and (2) becoming a better human being (John, Simon, Zahava). Thus, some people entered teaching with a *fixed* idea of self, and teaching was about being true to that inner self. Others saw themselves as a work in progress and welcomed EFL teaching as an opportunity for *growth*. Both groups invoked the past, but the former group did so to express core ideas of self and show that they were being true to that self, while the latter focused on the new depths their personality and understandings had reached from living and working in other countries. For the teachers in the first category, who they were as teachers was an outgrowth of their needs, their fears, their past experiences, and their interests and beliefs. To Beth, being true to self meant being friendly, and not distancing herself from her students. Beth needed to form connections with her students, and had found that she couldn't act in a way that was foreign to her in the classroom.

Beth: when I've tried to do that (keep her distance from students), it hasn't worked because it's not who I am

Beth: I went in and I tried to be really stern you know and not smile and so on and it just didn't last because it's not me

To Gabriel, being true to self meant teaching in such a way as to avoid facing his fears:

Gabriel: I hate to stand at the front of the room when I've asked the question – I am afraid of the silence I guess, so try and prevent that by never asking a question to the whole room if they haven't had a chance to think about it beforehand

To Arielle, being true to self meant choosing pathways that accentuated deep-seated tendencies and beliefs within herself: her teaching principles came from her interests and beliefs, and her Master's degree had only given her a way to articulate those connections. James also believed that the teacher he was was the teacher he always would have been – he had known earlier what he believed, but had been more influenced by what he had been taught, in his early years of teaching. Being true to self also meant learning from one's own personal experience, such as when Lackey

used his experience of being a bad language learner to empathize with his students and value their language learning efforts:

Lackey: My only consolation in that is that being a bad language learner and feeling how I feel when I'm trying to learn the language or trying to communicate, helps me understand and respect my students a lot more - for the effort they're making. So, when a student is doing really well and is making some leaps and bounds, I know how much that has taken and I can still appreciate that every single day, whereas I think if I knew the language really well, I might be a little bit more like ah you know after knowing the language well for a while, I might forget the struggle of learning that language and it might take me further away from my students in a way.

Simon, John, and Zahava, on the other hand, saw teaching as something that had helped them grow in ways they could not have grown in their home countries, and become better human beings. Simon had grown in ways he felt he would not have grown had he not lived and worked in other countries:

Simon: I'm more attuned to ... how people position themselves and what it is they're doing. It doesn't mean I always read it correctly, but I feel like I'm better at it than if I hadn't left Canada. ... it's hard to say what I would and wouldn't have done, but I feel like living overseas has made me or helped me push myself more than I would have otherwise.

Zahava felt that teaching had allowed her to “be myself more.” It gave the “shy” “frustrated actress” within her an outlet. And John felt that teaching had taught him patience, greater self-awareness and helped him become “a better person.”

John: I think one of the things I have learned is I am just - naturally me - I'm actually not particularly well suited to the teaching profession, ... teaching provides that opportunity to say you know I don't feel comfortable but this is what is required so I have to challenge myself and do it. So I think the profession's helped me be more self-aware, self-examining, self-critical and hopefully working towards being a better person.

5.1.10 Summarizing the themes in teachers' stories regarding teaching

The themes that emerged from the teachers' stories can be divided into four categories: facing cultural challenges in the classroom, dealing with the administration, dealing with students, and talking about the self. There was some overlap between these categories, as the stories teachers told had more than one focus. Thus, for example, in talking about the workplace, teachers mentioned that dealing with the administration caused them problems because of a lack of clearly defined goals. Yet this same problem was converted into a tale of the teacher's pride in their resilience and ability to cope, when the teachers talked about enjoying meeting the sudden challenges that were placed before them, and designing courses that met students' needs. The stories were also used to show that the teachers contrasted with administrative staff in putting the needs of the students first. These needs were prioritised in the classroom, with the teachers seeing themselves as facilitators or coaches helping students achieve their goals.

Teachers linked their personal lives to their work in several ways. They talked about the qualities of teachers who had taught them, and Arielle consciously linked the qualities she had admired to the qualities she brings to her own teaching. They linked their preferred learning techniques to how they taught. The eight NES EFL teachers in this study saw teaching either as a means of being true to themselves, or as a means of growth.

Teaching for a long time in other countries affected the teachers in various ways. Firstly, they learnt to adjust more rapidly to new teaching contexts. Secondly, through having taught for a long time, they learnt to have greater confidence in their own judgment. Finally, teaching for a long time meant that teachers had a greater bag of tricks to bring to teaching.

Cultural challenges came about from struggling to adapt to cultural differences in the teaching context upon first entering the foreign classroom, or from misunderstandings brought about by teachers imposing their own cultural knowledge on the teaching situation. When the teachers first began teaching, they felt seen, and judged, and responded by resisting the culture they were in. Working in the country for a long period of time meant that the teacher was more likely to understand cultural differences that had been invisible, because of unquestioned, unconscious assumptions the teacher held about behaviour and motivation. Upon arriving at a new

understanding of the cultural context, the teacher could either choose to incorporate this understanding into their worldview, as when Zahava realized the motivations behind students choosing their majors in Japan, or choose to remain true to their personal needs, as when Gabriel chose to continue to leave the workplace in breaks between classes, even after understanding that he was expected to stay at work.

5.2 Teachers talking about living in other countries

The teachers also talked about how they had changed because of living in other countries, and what their experiences in these countries had taught them. *Relationships* were important to help the teachers adjust to a new cultural context, with some teachers changing their attitudes toward the country when they fell in love with a local, others making decisions to benefit the family group, or leaving the country because their single status was not likely to change while they lived in that country. Teachers also moved easily between EFL and ESL, in pursuit of personal goals.

The country the teachers worked in made a difference. The teachers in Japan thought of the country as home. The teachers in Korea focused on maintaining their home identity. This difference was highlighted in their attitudes to language learning, how much effort they expended in trying to learn the local language, and in the reasons teachers gave explaining the importance of learning the local language.

After years spent working in other countries, all four teachers in Japan experienced reverse culture shock when they returned to their home countries, comparing their home countries unfavourably with Japan. Two of the teachers in Korea, however, expressed this difference as a change in their way of seeing the world, while one tried to maintain his national identity, and the fourth thought that Korea did not compare to her home country.

Male and female teachers reacted differently to living in the other country. Both were aware of the gaze of the *Other*, but the female teachers felt more pressure to change themselves to conform to societal expectations.

5.2.1 Decisions were driven by relationships

An important motivator for the teachers, in their decision to stay in or leave a country, were the personal connections they made with people in that country, and

the emotional connection they felt to the country. In the case of three of the teachers in Japan, their relationship with the country was intertwined with their relationship with their Japanese partner. For John, in Japan, and the four teachers working in Korea, their relationship with the country was not linked to their personal relationships.

Relationship status played a large part in teachers' decision making. A partner or child from the country provided an impelling reason to move to a country (Gabriel moved from Japan to Korea because of his Korean girlfriend; James moved to South Korea so that his son could learn about his Korean mother's home culture); or to stay in a country (Arielle, Zahava, and Simon stayed in Japan with their Japanese partners). Travelling with a partner gave the teacher a built-in support network, but also meant making decisions that provided for the welfare of the family unit (Lackey, John). And the lack of a possibility of a relationship provided a good reason to leave a country (Beth).

Arielle and Zahava both met their partners in their first year in Japan, with the meeting acting as a catalyst, changing their feelings towards the country.

Zahava: I was just refusing to do anything to integrate and ... then I met Toshio he was my student actually in the adult night school and then when we got together life started to get better because my comprehension got better I had a cultural informant I was in love

When the teacher had a partner or family, the welfare of the family unit took precedence. John was a house-husband for a year, because Misty, his wife, got a job at a Korean university, which promised to hire him, but then didn't. Lackey and his wife were motivated to move from New Zealand to Korea in search of better job security, and pay, so that they could support their two children. They also chose Korea because it was safer than the other countries they considered. James stated in the survey that his reason for moving to Korea was so that his son could get to learn about his Korean mother's culture, and get to know his Korean relatives.

Partners also provided financial and emotional support, helping the teacher find, or leave, jobs. Zahava's husband found her a job she loved when she was unhappy teaching private classes in Japan. Arielle talked about not enjoying several of her teaching jobs, with the implied context being that, with a new baby, and a Japanese

husband, she did not have the choice of leaving the country, but had the financial security to keep looking for jobs that would better suit her. Lackey's first excursion to Korea, with his wife, ended when, unhappy with their jobs, he and his wife "did a midnight flit" and returned to the USA.

The teachers' ties with their home country are also affected by their relationship status. John spoke of returning to the US every year because both his mother and his mother-in-law would be upset if they didn't see his wife yearly.

5.2.2 Japan was home

The four teachers in Japan showed that they want to integrate (Berry, 1997) into the country. For three of the four, married to Japanese partners, Japan was home, and they could not see themselves leaving, while the fourth, John, said he and his wife would stay as long as they could: "at this point in my career, I would say the words, you'll never go to Japan again would rattle me a bit more."

The negative side of living in Japan - the need to conform to societal expectations, and the impossibility of fitting in if one did not *look* right (Zahava and Arielle), the difficulty in understanding the motivation behind events without having a cultural informant (Zahava), and that the language was difficult to read or write, so the teachers had to focus on building speaking fluency (Arielle, John, Simon, Zahava) – did not outweigh the positives.

They had many positive things to say about Japan. It was clean (Zahava, John), people were polite and friendly (Zahava, John), and it was home (Simon, Arielle). Japan was compared favourably to their home countries. Arielle no longer felt at home in Britain, "It's not natural anymore." To John, there was much that the US could learn from Japan, especially in terms of politeness, harmony, friendliness, and order in the society. Zahava appreciated the focus on getting along with each other, and the harmony in Japanese society: "it's a precious gift and shouldn't be taken for granted."

Their home countries came off worse off when compared to Japan. Canadians were lazy and dirty, and lacked self-discipline, and life was too easy, said Zahava, while John (and his wife) found Americans 'fat and rude,' and John felt that Americans could learn a lot from the Japanese people. The four teachers in Japan had a deep appreciation for the values promulgated in Japanese society, these (politeness,

respect for others, self-discipline, valuing harmony and order) being seen as something that their own nations could learn from.

Speaking Japanese was a large part of the integration. Arielle spoke Japanese at home, with her husband and daughter, because they did not speak English well. John was studying Japanese (“I tell you at 42, I’m studying harder and more consistently than I did at 30”), and noted that almost everyone who moved to Japan to work learnt the language. Much of Simon’s social life was conducted in Japanese: it was what he spoke with his in-laws, and he felt that speaking Japanese more formally (his speech was more casual) would help him further his career, and help him integrate better into his Japanese workplace.

Zahava had the same need to fit better into the professional life of her university, and talked about having a Japanese work colleague who was helping her understand the differences in workplace culture.

Japan had given the teachers what they were looking for. For Simon, this was stability, and a place where he belonged. He had a tenured job, and permanent residency in Japan, and had put down roots in the country:

I’m married, we bought a house, um we just planted a tree – I have to take care of that, I can’t leave now!

Zahava credited Japan for helping her mature - and for helping her to learn to value maturity, ‘compromise, harmony, good food, ... responsibility.’

5.2.3 Refusal to assimilate into Korean culture

In contrast to the teachers in Japan, the teachers in Korea had a problematic relationship with the country, with none of them choosing to assimilate, to learn the language, or to meet (what they identified as) the cultural expectations of the country. In Berry’s (1997) terminology, they choose to separate, or to segregate themselves from Korean society.

One of the problems with Korea, for the lone woman I interviewed there, was that of feeling ‘invisible,’ because of her age and because she was single, in a country with rigidly stratified roles.

To be honest I find it ... not so much now as when I first got here... but even so, isolating here, particularly at my age and as a single person

you know. I figured if I ever want to date again I probably should go elsewhere (laughs) it sounds awful but you know we were talking earlier there's like the phenomenon of the Western men with the Korean wives but there's kind of like no flip version of it and I feel just invisible you know, and that gets old yeah (laughs)

The most scathing condemnation of Korea came from John, who had left the country six months earlier to work in Japan.

It's just like everything that came out of anybody's mouth is a lie

There is a mean streak in that country ... most of the terrible things I saw were done to other people and often done to Koreans

I was becoming a racist and actually I really felt that I had to get out because I wasn't liking me

He provided examples: administrative staff stating that they did not have forms teachers needed – even though the forms were in their desk drawer, Koreans treating Koreans badly, students lying to the teacher, membership training, where younger students had to keep drinking as long as their seniors told them to. He admitted though that this was at the university level, and that his experience in a language institute – the students, the administrative staff, was very different.

Gabriel spent several years moving, for work, between South Korea and Japan, and finally chose to live in Korea.

Korea kind of has a special place in my heart like it's the first place I really lived you know so I really like Japan um I think it's extremely pleasant but Korea kind of has a special feeling for me kind of jeong kind of thing.

Even so, when he talked about the challenging aspects of living in another country, he talked about how his awareness of the different cultural expectations that others have had grown – but his behaviour had not changed.

it's just like, oh, okay, that's how it works, well I'm gonna choose that I'm not going to participate in it“

John made a clear distinction between his own self-identity, and the culture he lived in. He dissociated his sense of self from others' perceptions of him, and saw the

people of Japan (and, to a lesser extent, Korea), as ‘them’. This othering enabled him to distance himself from belonging, from becoming part of the group. He positioned himself clearly as an outsider.

I think also now that I've been at it long enough it's sort of I understand the rule, it's their country, I'm just living in it, you know. And I think that initially when you come into this, they're doing it wrong. But you know there's a right way and there's a wrong way, but they're always going to do it their way

James saw his primary cultural affiliation lying with his home country, the USA. He was willing to entertain perceptions of himself as a Canadian – though he admitted to not knowing what the speaker meant by saying this, but his words showed a rejection of a Korean identity:

the living working in different countries points to cultural assimilation issues and I think that you know maybe I'm a little more flexible but at the same time I consciously make an effort to try and stay American and not um the best parts of America (laughs) although I do often get asked if I'm Canadian – don't know if that's a compliment

The teachers in Japan uniformly admired the country, and saw their futures there, while the teachers in Korea had a more problematic relationship with the country, choosing to maintain their own identities rather than assimilate. The interviews appeared to make clear that there were factors in the countries themselves that led to these beliefs. However, other factors might have been at stake. The age of the teachers, the time they had spent in Korea or Japan, respectively, and their relationship status, might all have played a part in their attitude to the countries. The teachers in Japan were older and had a deeper and longer commitment to the country, because (with Arielle, Zahava and Simon) of being married to Japanese partners. The teachers in Korea had spent less time in the country and saw the country only as a pit stop in their lives. Two of the teachers in Korea were also younger than the teachers in Japan (see Tables 5.5 and 5.6).

Table 5.5: Teachers' age, reason for working, and time spent in Korea.

Alias	Nationality	Age	Works here because	Time spent in Korea	Plan to stay for/until:
Beth	American	40-44	Work conditions	3.5 years	1.5 years
Gabriel	American	30-34	Work conditions	6 years	at least 2 years
James	American	45-50	Family connections / relationships	2.5+ years	not sure 6 months or more
Lackey	English	35-39	Standard of living	4.5 years	2 years
Maria	Australian of Indian descent	35-39	Work conditions	6 years	1 year

Table 5.6: Teachers' age, reason for working, and time spent in Japan.

Alias	Nationality	Age	Works here because	Time spent in Japan	Plan to stay for/until
Arielle	English	45-50	Family connections/ relationships	24 years	Probably until retirement.
John	American	40-44	Standard of living	7 in Japan, 5 in Korea	In Japan as long as possible.
Simon	Canadian	40-44	Family connections/ relationships	15 years	Indefinitely (sic)
Zahava	Canadian	45-50	Family connections/ relationships	15 years	forever

National identity might also have played a factor in the differential desire to assimilate shown by the teachers in Korea and the teachers in Japan. Korea is held to be the most Confucian of the East Asian countries (Sheridan, 1999). It places the highest emphasis on Koreans being part of an ethnically homogenous strongly bonded in-group. In this society, foreigners will always be outsiders. Knowing they would always be outsiders might have accounted for the lack of interest the teachers in the country felt in assimilating into Korean culture. The national composition of the two groups was also different: there was a greater mix of nationalities among the teachers interviewed in Japan (one British, two Canadian, one American), while

three of the four teachers interviewed in Korea were American. The rhetoric of uniqueness and exceptionalism in American national identity (Heiss, 2002) might not combine well with the emphasis on hierarchy and homogeneity in Korean culture.

5.2.4 Experiencing reverse culture shock

To Arielle, Gabriel, Zahava, and John, who had lived for long periods of time in Japan (English Arielle and Canadian Zahava) or both Korea and Japan (Americans both, Gabriel and John), their home countries were now the alien cultures.

Gabriel's thought patterns had changed, through living in Korea. He said he experienced reverse culture shock when he went back to the US, because, suddenly, ways of thought that he thought were natural, were not.

sometimes when I go home it's like, it's really, the reverse culture shock is more powerful than the culture shock, like really, you really think that, you don't, you can't see, oh wow, okay, cos, everybody I know (laughs) in Korea thinks like that now, okay well.

John and Zahava found their home countries (the USA and Canada, respectively), rude and dirty after having lived in Japan for a long period of time. John loved the politeness, the respect between people, and the orderliness of Japan. He talked about his wife, during their first stay in Japan, returning home to the US to visit her family, and calling her to find out how the visit was going. It was not going well: she said,

everybody's fat and rude

John used this as an example of how the USA could learn from Japan.

Zahava could no longer spend large periods of time at "home" because she was so attuned to life in Japan that she judged Canada harshly, by Japanese standards. Canadians were lazy, lacked self-discipline, and were dirty. Canadians were also not in tune with nature, as they drove everywhere. Zahava cycled to work, as did a large proportion of the faculty and the students at her university. Everything was "too easy" in Canada, so the people had no self-discipline.

Arielle was struggling with reconciling the identity Japanese people assigned to her (foreigner), with the identity she was assigned in Australia (Australian) and the identity she wished to claim (Japanese). Living in Britain was "not normal anymore:" she did not understand the cultural mores of Australia or her native country. Arielle,

Zahava, Gabriel, and John had each taken on values from the culture they lived in, to the extent of no longer fitting in in their home countries. They looked at “home” through the eyes of an outsider.

5.2.5 The gaze of the *Other*

Both men and women were aware of the cultural expectations on them, but the men felt free to disregard these, while the women felt pressured to conform, and were more strongly affected by societal judgments. To Zahava, one of the big differences between life in Canada and life in Japan was that, in Canada, she was not judged. In Japan, she felt that she was constantly on show, constantly being judged, and she would not leave the house without using make up, because, she believed, that that was what Japanese women did.

(speaking of Canada) you can wear what you want, no one's looking – they don't care if you wear make up or not – I mean usually I do not go out of the house without a face full of make up because you just don't in Japan. Women don't.

Beth felt “invisible” in Korea. Korean women were expected to marry by a certain age, and she, a foreigner, a woman, and in her forties, was single, which made her invisible in Korean society. The foreign men in the country were interested in dating Korean women, and neither the Korean nor the Western men were looking to date foreign women, and that influenced her decision to leave Korea.

I figured if I ever want to date again I probably should go elsewhere (laughs) it sounds awful but you know we were talking earlier there's like the phenomenon of the Western men with the Korean wives but there's kind of like no flip version of it and I feel just invisible you know, and that gets old

Arielle did not phrase her awareness in gendered terms. She felt the weight of the Japanese gaze pressing upon her, seeing her as foreign, denying her the acceptance that she would like to have. She had lived in Japan for 24 years, had a Japanese husband and daughter, and considered herself Japanese. However, she was seen as a foreigner.

My problem right now is having been here so long that I no longer know what my cultural identity is and so, dealing with that on a day-

to-day basis can sometimes be quite stressful, because people obviously see me and see a foreigner whereas for me this is my home and my family is here-

Women are usually expected to conform and are therefore more attuned to the gaze of the *Other* (Pavlenko, 2001), and this could explain the different reactions of the men and the women to feeling looked at or judged. Gabriel gave the example of turning down social invitations, even knowing that the cultural expectation was that he would say yes, because he didn't want to accept.

I think there's a lot of different expectations culturally you know. If someone invites me to dinner that day, and I happen to not feel like going, I have no problem saying no. I think in Korea, it's probably rude, I'm at peace with that, with myself, no, I'm really sorry, I - even if I'm not busy, I'll probably not go just cos I don't like that kind of thing I don't want to participate really

James was very aware of the gaze of the *Other*, but did not say anything to suggest that this might have changed his behaviour. In fact, he said, he tried to remain 'American' rather than try to fit in to the culture he lived in.

5.2.6 Language teachers as language learners

Language learning was a locus for identity issues. The NES EFL teachers brought past language learning experiences to their current work environments, as well as beliefs about language learning brought about by these past learning experiences. In addition, they had all tried to learn the local language and self-reported varying levels of proficiency in the local language. Table 5.7 summarizes the teachers' language learning experiences.

All eight teachers had learnt other languages when in school or university. Their claims to proficiency with the language they had learnt as students was divided along national lines: the two Canadian teachers, Simon and Zahava, started learning French in primary school, and saw themselves as (at least) bilingual. Three of the four American teachers started learning another language in secondary school. In the interviews, all three indicated that they were able to communicate sufficiently well to carry out interactions in that language.

Table 5.7: The language teacher as a language learner.

	Arielle	Beth	Gabriel	James	John	Lackey	Simon	Zahava	Maria
Started learning another language at age	11	13	12	19	15	7	5	5	0
Past experience of studying another language (P = primary school, S = secondary school, U = university)	S	SU	SU	U	SU	S	PS U	PS U	PS U
# of other languages <u>spoken</u> (excluding English) to any level of proficiency	1	1	2	6	3	0	3	3	3
Self-rated proficiency in <u>speaking</u> the local language (F = fluent, NP = not proficient, SP = sufficiently proficient for day-to-day interactions)	F	NP	SP	NP	SP	NP	F	SP	SP
Local language (J = Japanese, K = Korean)	J	K	K	K	J	K	J	J	K
Nationality (Am = American; Au = Australian; Br = British; Ca = Canadian)	Br	Am	Am	Am	Am	Br	Ca	Ca	Au

The two British teachers, Arielle and Lackey, had only studied another language in secondary school. They stated that they did not speak the languages they had learnt in school to any degree of proficiency, and saw themselves as bad language learners, based on these early language learning experiences. However, they incorporated these language learning experiences into their teaching, to state that being bad language learners had made them better teachers, better able to respect their students' efforts:

Arielle: So I struggle with language, and I think that, having gone through the struggle of learning the language has helped me understand what my students, especially some of my weaker students, might be going through.

Lackey: My only consolation in that is that being a bad language learner ... helps me understand and respect my students a lot more - for the effort they're making.

Lackey also noted that negative learning experiences when learning French had contributed to his inability to speak the language:

my French teacher was just awful as well - he would just ridicule any student that had trouble learning French and I certainly wasn't a- and I'm still not - a strong language learner, so that I mean, I don't remember a lot of French

When it came to speaking Japanese or Korean, the teachers in Japan rated themselves as fluent speakers or sufficiently proficient to carry out day-to-day interactions in the language. This contrasted with the teachers in Korea, where only one teacher, Gabriel, saw himself as sufficiently proficient to carry out interactions in Korean, while the other three said that they did not speak Korean proficiently and were not able to communicate in the language.

5.2.7 Proficiency in the local language reflected commitment to the country

All the teachers reflected a preoccupation with identity formation when they talked about learning the local language. Attitudes to learning the local language reflected commitment to staying in the country – the *investment* (Norton Peirce, 1995) the teacher was willing to make; attitudes towards the local culture – the degree to which the teacher chose to assimilate or integrate into the culture (Berry, 1997); and the struggle the teacher had in reconciling incongruous aspects of their selves (Ochs & Capps, 1996).

At its most basic, learning the local language reflected the commitment teachers had to staying in the country. None of the English teachers in Korea was currently studying Korean, or planned to improve their Korean ability – with excuses ranging from lack of time due to family commitments, and also lack of ability (Lackey), the lack of necessity because of Korean speaking family members (James and Gabriel) or because they were leaving the country (Beth), while all four teachers in Japan were committed to continuing to work on improving their Japanese: Simon and Zahava because they felt it would improve their chances of promotion at work,

Arielle because she felt Japanese, having lived in the country for more than 20 years, and John because he was determined to live in Japan for as long as possible.

Arielle and Simon conducted their daily lives in Japanese. It was the language spoken in the home, and often the language spoken when they went out, said Simon. Arielle's husband and daughter didn't speak English well, so the family communicated in Japanese. For Zahava, learning Japanese met her need to be independent. Despite using Japanese daily, the three still felt that they didn't speak it fluently. Each of them admitted to not reading or writing the language well, but they spoke it well enough for day-to-day interactions.

Maria: How well do you speak Japanese?

Arielle: Not as well as I'd like but yeah ... at home our language is Japanese.

Simon: I don't want to say that I've mastered Japanese or anything like that because I ... couldn't say that, but ... I speak Japanese at home um much of my social life happens in Japanese

Zahava: I studied it when I was in Kyoto. Cos I was – I just couldn't stand being illiterate.

The fourth teacher in Japan was John. He was studying Japanese and explained the difference between learning Korean and learning Japanese thus:

Well, I didn't learn Korean, I picked up some Korean, big difference ... When I came over to Japan, ... I got my hands on a couple of textbooks and I put in more effort, ...cos I tell you at 42, even now, I'm studying harder and more consistently than I did at 30

The teachers living in Japan saw language learning as a marker of professionalism (Simon), and as a choice that would help them advance in their profession, because they would be treated with more respect by work colleagues and would be able to participate more fully in the academic life of the university (Simon, Zahava). As Simon said,

I know lots of people don't (choose to learn Japanese when living in Japan), but I never thought about it as an option, it just always seemed like self-evident that if you're living here, you should speak

John, who had worked in both South Korea and Japan, expressed this difference in terms of EFL teachers' attitudes to learning Korean and Japanese:

I have found anybody who's been here a month speaks some Japanese, you know, it's hard to find somebody who hasn't learned the alphabet, you know, who can't conduct themselves pretty well, whereas, I find in Korea, if you find a native speaker who speaks Korean – I mean a native English speaker who speaks Korean, it's like wow! How did you do that?

Language learning was also a reflection of attitudes towards the local cultures. This was most evident in John, who had worked in both Korea and Japan. He did not have happy memories of Korea, and did not speak fondly of Korean people and culture, whereas he thought Americans could learn a lot from Japanese culture. This admiration for the politeness, getting along, friendliness, orderliness, good service in restaurants translated into “hey, we (*Americans*) could learn something from this country”. In contrast, Korea was more insecure and self-centred:

I get to Korea, and it's just like oh you gotta drop the nationalism, drop the jingoism, drop the fantasies about how you know the IMF undermined your economy ... and these other conspiracies, ... the rudeness, the people breaking in front of you in line, pushing and spitting inside of buildings, the public urination, the the national inability to drive

James echoed what John had said: he spoke Japanese better than his other languages because he spent a long time in the country, and was committed to learning the language, whereas, in Korea, where he lived at the time of the interview, he did not speak the language as well, in part because he lived in an English ghetto, with over 100 native speaker English teachers working in his university – which means he had no real need to speak Korean, and mainly because he had a Korean wife, who spoke both Korean and English fluently (the implication being that he could speak English with her, and she handled all interactions that required Korean).

To Lackey, his family came first: “we're a family of four, you know, we speak English to each other and family comes first”. Beth said simply, when asked about learning Korean, that she chose not to learn it, because “when I leave Korea I'm not

likely to need Korean again”. She was quite clear that Korea was not someplace she would have stayed for a long time.

On the other hand, Korea “has a special place in my heart” said Gabriel. He described his relationship with the country using the Korean term “*jeong*,” which, roughly translated, would mean something like ‘a feeling of connection with a place or person (or an inanimate object), this is sometimes love, sometimes hate, but the connection is always there and undeniable.’ He felt like a visitor in Japan, but at home in Korea. This connection to the countries was reflected in his language learning – in the interview, he rated himself at a pre-intermediate level of proficiency in Korean, but at elementary level in Japanese, stating that he was never motivated to learn Japanese.

Finally, language learning was a site for identity formation and change, affecting the individual’s investment in their social identity (Norton Peirce, 1995). Beth made explicit this struggle with identity in talking about not learning Korean. She offered several reasons for not learning Korean: illness, her workload, tiredness after the length of her workday. Then, she said:

another piece though is, I discovered that although it’s not smooth, you can survive here without it - I mean at least particularly in a big city like Seoul, and when I leave Korea I’m not likely to need Korean again, but I feel more like I wish I had learned more because it would have made life easier and my experience less isolating and I wouldn’t have felt quite so much like an ugly American you know assuming that the rest of the world should cater to us and speak English and do everything in English you know, but then we’re willing to meet people half way you know

The conflict she faced in reconciling who she thought she was (*not* an ‘ugly American’) with the reality of not having learnt Korean led her to “cultivate a dialogue between diverse understandings” (Ochs and Capps, 1996, p.32): to try out different explanations of why she had not learnt it. (1) She was “not likely to need Korean” once she left Korea –justifying and rationalising her decision not to learn the language. (2) This conflicted with the isolation she mentioned she had felt, and she reflected that learning the language would have helped her be less isolated and “made life easier.” (3) Not learning the language had made her feel like “an ugly

American” – she referred to the stereotype of Americans not attempting to fit in to the cultures they visited, and expecting those other cultures to speak to them in English. This did not resonate with her sense of self. Yet the characterization of Americans as unwilling to adapt also caused her problems, and this led her to the next step in the dialogue: (4) defending and justifying American behaviour by pointing out that they *were* adaptable and flexible “we’re willing to meet people halfway you know”.

5.2.8 The importance given to learning the local language

The eight teachers all thought it was important to learn the local language – but modified this by admitting that they did not feel that they had learnt the local language well enough. Their reasons for learning the local language focused on easing their adaptation to the new country, instead of on classroom or professional development centred reasons (see Table 5.8).

In talking about how learning the local language would facilitate their lives in that country, the teachers talked about changing how they were perceived by the locals, and how their own perceptions of the local people could be modified. Among the reasons given for learning the language were, to give them greater independence in living in the country (5 teachers), and to enable them to enter more fully into the life of the community (4 teachers). Three teachers thought that learning the local language would help them understand the local culture, while two teachers focused on how NES EFL teachers might be viewed, and said it was important for the teacher to make a good impression.

Beth, with only a week to go before she left Korea, and, presumably, reflecting on her time in Korea, was the only one to offer answers that focused solely on living in the country. The other teachers generally gave answers that reflected a focus on both the classroom and on their lives outside the classroom and university. Simon and Zahava both also thought learning Japanese would facilitate their professional life (which they saw as being in Japan).

School or teaching centred reasons were mostly passive: understanding the students’ experience, or the linguistic differences between the languages, or modifying teaching to meet students’ needs – without speaking the language with the students. The reasons included emotional factors, such as bonding with the students,

intangibles such as setting an example for the students, and understanding the students' language learning experiences, as well as using one's knowledge of the language to understand the problems the students were having, by listening to them talk, and modifying teaching, lesson plans, or class activities accordingly.

Table 5.8: Reasons to learn the local language.

	Arielle	Beth	Gabriel	James	John	Lackey	Simon	Zahava	Maria
Student/teaching-centred reasons									
1. Bonding with the students					X		X		
2. Facilitating student learning								X	X
3. Modifying teaching after overhearing students talking about problems							X		X
4. Setting an example for the students	X								X
5. Understanding linguistic differences between the languages, and addressing these			X		X				X
6. Understanding the students' language learning experience	X		X	X		X			
Focused on working in the other country									
Facilitating one's professional life							X	X	X
Focused on living in the other country									
1. Entering more fully into the life of the community	X	X					X	X	X
2. Greater independence in living in the country	X	X	X				X	X	X
3. Understanding the culture				X	X		X		X
4. Creating a good impression of the foreign language teacher		X					X		

Gabriel was the only person to suggest that the teacher's problems with learning the local language might not be beneficial to either the students or the teacher. If a NES teacher spoke Korean well, it could lead them to show off their language skills, or lead them to erroneously attribute errors in the L1 to interference from the L2.

5.2.9 Summarizing the themes in teachers' stories regarding living in other countries

Living in Korea reinforced the teachers' national identity, and association with their home country. Even Gabriel, the teacher who chose Korea over Japan because of a special connection he felt to the country, spoke of distancing himself from the local customs and maintaining his identity as an outsider. The teachers who lived in Japan, on the other hand, admired the country, planned to continue living there for as long as possible, and had many good things to say about cultural mores and behaviour. The desire to learn the local language, as well as teachers' proficiency in speaking the local language, was linked to the teachers' feelings about the country, with teachers more likely to learn the local language in Japan than in Korea. Four of the teachers spoke of experiencing reverse culture shock when they returned to their home countries. Gabriel related this to a broadening of his cultural horizons, Arielle felt alienated from her home country, while the other two teachers found that they had assimilated to such an extent into the Japanese cultural context that they judged their home countries through this lens. Both men and women felt exposed to the judgment of the *Other*, but this reinforced the men's identification with their national identity, while causing the women to question their identity, attempt to conform to local cultural norms, or leave because of the discomfort they felt.

5.3 Resonance 1: Expanding horizons

There were striking similarities and resonances in the way four of the teachers: British Arielle, Canadian Simon, and Gabriel and John, both American, structured their stories of entering teaching. In this 'expanding horizons' narrative, a small town girl/boy discovers a great big world and falls in love. S/He finds a job that will let him/her see more of the world – and a temporary change becomes a permanent one, marked (overtly for three of the four) by getting a Master's degree. The four stories bounce and echo off one another in the poem below, which consists of quotes from the teachers' stories.

Beginnings:

Gabriel: I grew up in a small town ...

Arielle: a very small town,

Simon: very small town, we didn't even live in the town, I lived on a dirt road

Arielle: no, no, I'm from the middle of nowhere actually,

Gabriel: the middle of nowhere, wolves, long winters

The stories started with a small town. The idea of the small town evoked isolation, nothing to do, nothing around the person, bounded horizons.

Discovery:

John: when I was 16 I became an exchange student in Germany for one year

Gabriel: I went to Spain in 1999 to study abroad

Arielle: I went to India for a year as a volunteer ... it changed my whole view of life and education

Gabriel: there was this whole world out there

John: I just had that urge from an early age to get out and see things and do things

Simon: so I looked around for some exciting option ... before I start my real career

Gabriel: I gotta do something, what am I gonna do?

Then there was the first change: the discovery of a larger world. Travel was an integral part of this discovery: the teachers stepped out of their homogenous, safe world into a milieu that was different. They were introduced to a different perspective and a different way of living. This larger world brought excitement, passion, difference – and an urgent desire to embrace that difference.

Knowledge and desire:

Simon: I was pretty much always certain that I was going to be a teacher

Arielle: I actually wanted to be an ESL teacher ... but (her university) was advertising the JET program very heavily and I thought, well that's intriguing

John: I was very interested in going overseas and working

The teachers knew what they wanted out of life, they had made plans for their future. The story of discovery and the story of knowledge and desire are paralleled in the

teachers' narratives: they were telling tales of having had plans and goals, and of a disruption to these when they discovered a greater world beyond their home towns.

The first teaching job:

John: I took a job teaching in Korea

Simon: I took a job ... working in immersion with Turkish students

Gabriel: I was starting to look for jobs all around, ... this woman ... sold me on Korea as an idea

Arielle: my first real job was here (in Japan) as an ALT on the JET program

The actual first job teaching EFL was described matter of factly.

The plan:

Arielle: I thought, oh all right, that might be interesting for a year

Simon: I thought oh I'll go home and start my career when I'm 28

Gabriel: my plan was five countries in five years – and then I'll get serious about whatever

John: for two years (in Korea), I spent a lot of time thinking about what else I was going to do, but I also just started thinking you know this is actually pretty interesting

Simon: I started to hear stories about Japan ... I thought well that's not a bad place to spend two years

None of the teachers had long term plans to teach EFL. They put a time limit on teaching, anywhere from one to five years. For each of the teachers, the plan was to just take a slight detour out of the normal career path, then return to the 'real' world and their 'real career.'

Getting serious:

John: I did come up with ... I want to make a life doing this sort of thing

John: I was just thinking ... I'm not going to be 50 years old, doing 8 hours at (a bad language school), and so at that point I knew I would need to get a Master's

Simon: I gave up that sort of whole business aspect of life and just said I'm going back to the classroom so I took a really bad job teaching for a private like language school ... it paid the bills while I was in graduate school

Arielle: these moves were because of my husband's job and after we moved to Nagasaki I'd just had my daughter

Gabriel: then I started to get really serious about teaching around that time I guess, and then I started my Master's distance online 2008

For these men, starting a Master's degree marked the shift into thinking of teaching EFL as a career. To Arielle (who has also completed a Master's degree), being a wife and becoming a mother played a decisive role in changing EFL teaching into a career.

The striking parallels in the way these four teachers structured their stories were echoed only slightly by the other four teachers. The other four teachers split neatly into two pairs in the parallel structuring in their stories, but the resonances and patterns were not as marked. Beth and Lackey's stories told of a search for stability – financial stability in Beth's case, and the cohesive maintenance of the family unit in the case of Lackey. Both Zahava's and James' stories were stories of motion – of travel from place to place, but their focus was diametrically opposed. Zahava ran away to find herself. James stayed true to himself through all the changes of place.

5.4 Resonance 2: A complete change

The conceptual framework of the study in [Chapter 1](#) outlined links between identity, culture, language, and time. In talking about how living and working in another land had contributed to their sense of self and identity, the teachers added another facet to the framework (Figure 5.2): the imagined self. When the teachers talked about how they had changed because of living in another country, they referred to the self they imagined they would have been had they stayed in their home country.

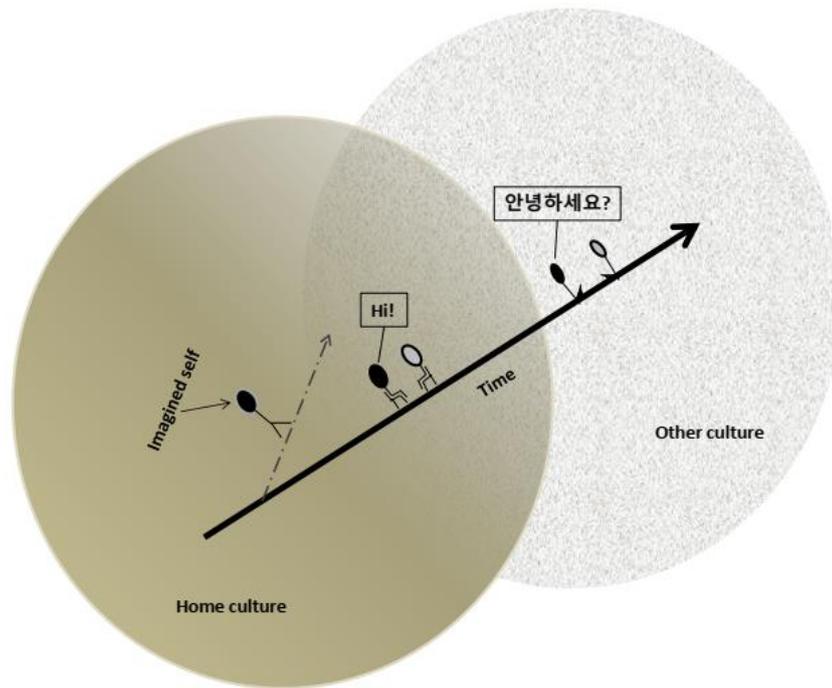


Figure 5.2: Identity is modified by time, identity and culture – and references an imagined self.

This second poem contains the voices of all eight teachers, talking about how living and working in another country has changed them. For seven of the eight, living and working in other countries had made them stronger, more open-minded and flexible, and much much *more* than they could have been, had they stayed in their own country.

And then there was James, the traveller. James hadn't changed at all, and worked hard at not changing. James was the one teacher who reported constant moves when he was younger, and saw living in different countries as a natural outgrowth of that. Childhood experiences affected these teachers' identity in different ways: Growing up in a stable, unchanging background meant a change in identity for teachers living in new worlds. But growing up in a forever changing world (James) meant the emphasis, in another country, was on staying the same, on maintaining one's identity.

A complete change

Arielle: Oh, completely, completely (laughs),

Zahava: it's changed me a lot

Simon: I don't think there's anything that hasn't changed ... absolutely everything has changed

Growing

John: I grew up a lot

Zahava: I grew up and I woke up

Stronger

Arielle: it's definitely made me a better, stronger person,

Beth: I think it's toughened me

My world is bigger

Arielle: broadened my horizons no end

Beth: It's also broadened my horizons

Gabriel: it's given me a much broader perspective on things

Lackey: travel broadens the mind, and it's definitely broadened mine

Beth: I would've had less of an idea that, oh yeah I could do that

And I am more

Simon: I'm more open-minded, I know I'm more flexible

Simon: I'm more attuned to other people

Simon: more tolerant of ambiguity than I used to be

Simon: I might be a little bit more ambitious because I've left

John: I figured out there's more than one way of doing things

Simon: living overseas has made me or helped me push myself more than I would have otherwise

Lackey: we've become more accepting of different cultures and different ways of doing things

Zahava: I've learned how to prepare food

Zahava: I've learned principles of good nutrition

Zahava: I appreciate those things a lot more – compromise, harmony, good food, grow up, responsibility, family

I haven't changed!

James: well I think I moved eleven times before I went into fifth grade so the living and working in another country seemed like part of that process

James: maybe I'm a little more flexible but at the same time I consciously make an effort to try and stay American

James: I'm not uncomfortable with moving around

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter looked at themes that were repeated in the teachers' stories. Though the themes were divided into distinct sub-headings, there was overlap between them, showing the integrated way in which stories are constructed. Thus, for example, the teachers talked about the problems they had with administration at work – yet these stories often merged into stories of the teachers' flexibility in adapting to the challenge of designing and implementing courses on short notice, while also revealing the impact of cultural differences on teacher identity. The teachers had learnt to be more adaptable as they became more experienced – and had also developed confidence in their own decision-making. Teachers' stories of teaching focused either on being true to themselves or on becoming better people through teaching. When it came to living abroad for long periods of time, relationships with locals were often a motivating factor in deciding to stay or to leave the country. The teachers in Japan, three of whom were married to Japanese partners, were more invested in staying in the country and in being accepted into Japanese culture and more critical of their home countries. The teachers in Korea were more invested in staying true to their national identity. Language learning proficiency was related to the degree of investment teachers felt towards the country, with teachers in Japan more motivated to improve their use of the Japanese language. The teachers in Korea offered a range of reasons to explain why they had not learnt Korean to any great degree of fluency: from having Korean partners who could handle any required interactions in Korean, to not needing the language when they left the country, to having to focus on raising their family, to not needing to use Korean to any great degree of proficiency. The teachers focused on facilitating their own lives when talking about the reasons to learn the local language. The themes in this chapter and

in [Chapter 4](#) appear in [Chapter 6](#) as the findings of this study, linked to the research questions.

Reflection R5: People just like me

When I designed the study, I planned to interview *people just like me*: long-term native English-speaking English-as-a-foreign language (NES EFL) teachers who had worked in at least two countries and taught English for at least ten years. In this reflection, I talk about discovering that there was one very important way in which I differed from the other teachers – in ethnicity – and how this discovery affected who I thought I was, caused me to question my own identity, and question the themes I should be researching. This reflection, like Reflection R1, talks about the effect of the *Other* on a person's identity.

The interviewees and I shared a lot. We were all native English speakers. We had all completed a Bachelor's degree in some field, and a Master's degree in English language teaching. We had all taught English in two or more countries, and had all been teaching English for at least ten years. We worked in either South Korea or Japan at the time of the interviews. We were all active in local professional development organisations – KOTESOL in Korea, and JALT in Japan. We were roughly the same age – with the majority of us in our 40s. We all came from inner circle, English-speaking countries.

A central question, in both the questionnaire and the interview, was that of the teachers' ethnic background. I included the question because I have had past experience of having my words ignored, in favour of the 'evidence' provided by my skin colour – an "everyday racism," that "insists on attributing fixed sets of meanings to non-white bodies" (Weedon, 2004, p. 15), and I did not want to inflict this same racism on the teachers. Yet, in the moment of asking the question, I began to realize that a defining moment in my life, one that is constantly under challenge, didn't exist in theirs, when the majority of the teachers had problems describing their ethnicity. Thus, for example, Lackey, trying to answer the question in the interview:

*Oh, ethnic background. (pause) what does that mean? I don't know -
I'm British that's the answer I guess, I think. I'm British.*

Only two of the eight teachers offered the same ethnicity in both the questionnaire and the interview (Table R5.1): Zahava described herself through religious affiliation as Jewish. Beth clarified that she puts herself down as 'White' on censuses in the

USA, because of the problematic nature of explaining her racial and ethnic descent, but went on to talk about the Irish and Russian / Jewish background of her parents. The other teachers offered different answers in the questionnaire, reflecting their confusion with having to define their identity, a confusion that might stem from seeing Whiteness as universal and unmarked (Perry, 2007; Weedon, 2004). Table R5.1 gives the teachers' nationalities, their ethnicity, as self-defined in the questionnaire, and their ethnicity as self-defined in the interview. The last column contains references they made as to how they were perceived by others (predominantly students or locals in the country where they lived) as being from other countries than their own.

Table R5.1: Teachers' nationalities and ethnicities.

	From	Ethnicity (self-defined in the questionnaire)	Ethnicity (self-defined in the interview)	Ethnicity (as perceived by others)
Arielle	Britain	White British	Western European	Australian, American
Beth	The USA	White American (Irish and Russian/Jewish descent)	White (census), (explains parents' background)	Western, the ugly American
Gabriel	The USA	White	White American, Irish-Italian-German	
James	The USA	mostly caucasian north american (wasp)	influences from Irish British Scots kind of history coloured by generations in the United States	Canadian
John	The USA	Caucasian	Northern European	
Lackey	Britain	White	British	
Simon	Canada	Scots / Irish Canadian	east coast Canadian, (redacted reference to specific part of	

	From	Ethnicity (self-defined in the questionnaire)	Ethnicity (self-defined in the interview)	Ethnicity (as perceived by others)
			Canada ⁴⁷	
Zahava	Canada	Jewish	Jewish	
Maria	Australia	Australian of Indian descent	Australian	Indian

I talked, in Reflection R1, about being seen as “Indian” where I see myself as Australian, occasionally by teaching colleagues, but more frequently by locals in the places I have lived, and of the problems this has caused me. Thinking about the problems six of the teachers had defining their ethnicity made me question *why* I had not realized I was brown-skinned. I began to review the literature on teachers of colour in the English language teaching field (Javier, 2010, 2016; Lin et al., 2004), on ethnicity and identity (S. Hall, 1991; Spencer, 2006) and native speakerism (A. Holliday, 2006; Phillipson, 1997) with a view to finding resonances in what was written with my personal experiences. After meeting Eljee Javier, who had been researching the experiences of visible ethnic minority NES EFL teachers (Javier, 2010, 2016) and assumed that I was doing the same, I began to wonder whether I was mistaken in who *people just like me* were. Should I have been interviewing and writing about other non-white NES EFL teachers? I questioned my inclusion in my own study, because I complicated what had been, to me, an unproblematic look at NES EFL teacher identities by bringing in narratives of belonging and (not) fitting in. Yet the teachers’ stories *are* narratives of finding a place to belong. So, in choosing to write about people living, and trying to fit in, in other cultures, I truly was writing about *people just like me*.

⁴⁷ The reference to the specific part of Canada Simon is from is not included, to help preserve his anonymity.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

[Chapter 5](#) summarized common themes in the teachers' stories. One important theme was that teachers prioritized their personal lives over their teaching selves, and either returned to core ideas of self to explain their teaching, or spoke of teaching as providing opportunities for personal and moral growth. In addition, most of the teachers experienced culture shock upon first moving into another culture and did not like the change. Time spent working overseas led them to a more nuanced understanding of the other culture. However, despite this greater understanding, some teachers prioritized maintenance of core concepts of self and chose not to adapt to the culture, while others tried to assimilate. Relationships with locals – or relationships in general - were a motivating factor in teachers' decision-making, determining whether teachers would stay in a country or move to another country. They were also a factor determining which country they moved to. The four teachers in Korea were less interested in assimilating into the local culture and more invested in maintaining their national identity than the teachers in Japan. The teachers in Japan greatly admired facets of Japanese culture, and worked hard to learn the Japanese language, in order to fit in better into the country.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study, addressing the questions of how self is constructed and how the identities of long-term native English-speaking (NES) English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teachers are affected by living and working in other countries. The first section of the chapter looks at how this study provided a deeper understanding of the relationship between teaching, self and NES EFL teacher identity. This section is titled 'Teaching, self, and identity' and relates to Research Question 1. The second section addresses how allegiance to social identity groupings was modified by living and working in different countries. Related to Research Question 2, this section is titled 'National identity and other social identities.' Attitudes to language learning emerged from both research questions, but are discussed as part of Research Question 2 in this chapter. There were a number of findings that were unrelated to the research questions. These are discussed in the third section of the chapter, titled 'Supplemental findings unrelated to the research questions.' Recommendations for further research and conclusions are given to conclude the thesis.

6.1 Teaching, self and identity

The teachers' stories told of how the experience of teaching in a non-English-speaking, non-native land contributed to their sense of self and identity. The teachers' personal narratives told of culture shock upon first entering a new country, a shock centered on behavioural differences that they found confrontational and difficult to understand, a shock at being *seen, noticed* instead of being invisible. There was a sense of *rejecting* the country, or of feeling rejected by its people, because of different cultural expectations. They rejected a cultural narrative that located the teacher as the font of knowledge, and chose to structure their identity around being 'the guide on the side.' They *recognized* situation-specific cultural beliefs, but proved capable of resisting these to remain true to their own beliefs. They *resisted* situational expectations of their behaviour, and subverted official narratives and expectations to meet their students' needs. While the teachers mentioned *resistance* as their first reaction to living in a different country, the keynote was *resilience* when they talked about teaching EFL. Experienced EFL teachers thrive on the challenges offered by teaching different age groups, different types of courses, and adapting to variations in course duration and planning. They put their experience to use to adapt to meet students' needs as quickly as possible once they moved into a new teaching context.

6.1.1 Teachers prioritized personal lives over professional identity

Teachers prioritized their personal life over their professional life in different ways in their life stories. Firstly, they chose to move to a country or stay in a country because of a relationship with a local. After an initial rocky start, where they were shocked by the differences between the Japanese workplace and their own countries, both Arielle and Zahava were motivated to adapt because they had begun long-term relationships with Japanese men. Zahava stated that she felt more settled in Japan once she started dating her husband, with love making the difference that helped her adapt to cultural differences in the classroom. Simon met his Japanese wife in Canada, and left a managerial position in a Japanese school in Canada to return to teaching in Japan, to be with her. James had married a Korean woman. He moved with her and their son to Korea to teach, so that their son could get to know his Korean grandparents. Gabriel chose to live and work in Korea, after three years of moving regularly between Japan and Korea, because of his Korean girlfriend. Not being in a relationship with a local,

and facing the possibility of not dating if she stayed in Korea was partly responsible for Beth's decision to leave EFL to return to the USA to teach ESL. The decision to continue teaching EFL in South Korea or Japan was, therefore, strongly dependent on NES EFL teachers forming and aiming to maintain relationships with locals.

Secondly, being in relationships or having a family meant that the couple made decisions jointly, for the good of the family unit. Teachers moved from teaching EFL to ESL or vice versa to facilitate their personal lives. Thus, Zahava moved from Japan to Canada to teach for a few years so that her future husband could get to know her culture and family, and then they returned to Japan. Lackey and his wife decided to take up teaching positions in Korea because the country offered the best quality of life for their children, even though other options would have been more personally satisfying or would have paid better. John and Lackey were both married to other teachers. Both couples chose workplaces where they could work together.

Thirdly, the personal was prioritized over the professional when the teacher took up or gave up jobs because of needing to accommodate their partner's job. Arielle had had to give up jobs she loved when her husband was transferred to other cities, and had had to look for jobs with every move. However, having a partner who worked full time also gave Arielle the option of leaving jobs that she did not like because the family was not dependent on her income.

Lastly, having a partner meant that the teacher had their own personal support network. Thus, when Zahava was unhappy in a job, her husband found her a teaching job in another city and persuaded her to take it, even when this meant that they lived in different cities for three years. Having a partner who was also a teacher meant that the two could learn from each other and share ideas, according to John. John's wife also became the primary breadwinner when he was unable to find work, while Lackey supported his wife when she had their children. In addition, when Lackey and his wife first moved to Korea, and didn't like their jobs, they were able to 'do a runner' (leave without giving notice) and stay with his wife's parents while they looked for other jobs. The partners supported each other financially and emotionally. Identity is developed through social interaction (Danielewicz, 2001; S. Hall, 1991; Hyland, 2012; Riley, 2007), yet when the teacher was in a relationship, their partner provided a buffer zone supporting them in their interactions with the local culture. When the partner was also a teacher, s/he helped them become better teachers. While

previous studies (Johnston, 1997; Mullock, 2009; Phillips, 1989) found that EFL teachers prioritize their personal lives over their professional, this study looked at *how* the personal life was prioritized, and added details to Mullock's (2009) and Gilman's (2016) findings that some teachers continued to teach EFL in order to be with a partner who was from the country they worked in.

6.1.2 Teaching reinforced core concepts of self

The 'self' refers to a social identity, forged, reinforced, and modified in interactions with other people (Blustein & Noumair, 1996; Bruner, 2001; O'Connor & Scanlon, 2005). Four of the teachers regarded teaching as an expression of their inner self, and a means of remaining true to that self. They used their concepts of self to connect with their students or to inform their teaching. Beth saw herself as a caring person who formed connections with her students, and was unable to keep her distance, even when told that it was culturally appropriate to do so. Gabriel, who feared silence in the classroom, took care to give the students time to practice before having them respond to questions. Arielle saw her teaching as an outgrowth of who she was and as an expression of beliefs she had always had. Lackey used his concept of himself as a bad language learner as a teaching strength that enabled him to value his students' efforts to learn English, and connect with them.

6.1.3 Teaching was a means of personal growth

Three of the other teachers, Simon, John, and Zahava, saw teaching as something that had helped them become *more* than they could otherwise have been, and to grow in ways that they could not have grown if they had not become teachers. John had to overcome his own tendency to impatience and had to learn to cede control in order to meet the students' needs, and credits the teaching profession for making him more self-aware and a better person. Simon credited the exposure to different cultural contexts teaching had given him for a more developed understanding of behavioural motivations, and a greater acceptance of differences in human behaviour. Teaching allowed Zahava to amplify her personality, to overcome her shyness, to allow the actress within her free rein, and to grow into herself. While Zahava credited the profession of teaching for helping her to grow, the other two teachers explicitly credited the teaching of EFL, with the contact it forced them into with other cultures, for their personal growth.

6.1.4 Teacher identity was constructed in cultural conflicts at work

The teachers clashed with workplace administration and attributed these clashes to conflicts between Western (the countries the NES EFL teachers came from) and Eastern (here, South Korean and Japanese) cultural norms. Western norms were to be deduced from the explanations of the cultural practices the teachers disagreed with. These positioned the teachers as caring, student-focused professionals, working in a market-driven, unprofessional (because of how information was conveyed, or a lack of interest in the students' welfare) environment. Workplace administrators were variously viewed as focused on profit (Simon and John), antagonistic towards NES EFL teachers (John), uninterested in the students' welfare (John, Beth), and liable to make "ridiculous" (John) last-minute requests that teachers were required to fulfil or implement (Gabriel, John, Beth, Simon). Teachers responded negatively by leaving jobs (Beth, John) or by refusing to modify their behaviour (Gabriel), or saw the last minute requests from administration as a challenge and as an opportunity for professional growth (Gabriel, Simon).

When teachers felt that their struggles with workplace administration stopped them from working effectively and caused them emotional distress, they left jobs. Petty obstructive behaviour by workplace administration, like lying about not having forms John required, or making up complaints when the teacher refused to follow non-contractual mandates made John angry and led to him changing jobs. Asked to design or teach courses with little clarity as to the goals of the course, and constant changes of plan, Beth felt frustrated and unable to work efficiently, so she resigned. An alternative option teachers chose was to understand the local cultural norms, but not to follow these. This was evident when Gabriel realized he was expected to stay at work during breaks, when working in Korea, but chose to continue leaving his office to carry out errands or exercise. When the teachers found that acceptance of local cultural norms conflicted with their identity, they prioritized maintenance of identity over conformity to the local norms in the school environment.

The teachers saw themselves as caring more for the students' welfare than the administration did. Beth spoke of cultural norms that prioritized hierarchical power relations in Korea when she spoke of being emotionally moved by her Korean students' gratitude for her friendliness. Lackey chose to prepare a treasure hunt for his students, which met the administrative requirement that classes not be cancelled

while still giving the students' time to rest during Festival Week. He also chose not to force students to work if they didn't want to, allowing them to prioritize their personal desires over a country-wide administrative mandate that all Korean university students take English classes. Empathising with the students' needs and subverting local cultural norms was an important part of identity formation with these teachers.

While Beth left a job where she was given little guidance about courses she was asked to design, or teach, where the aims of the course and its design kept changing, other teachers saw the non-existent curriculums and lack of input from administration as a benefit, which allowed them to set their own challenges and design their own courses. Gabriel, Simon, and Zahava all spoke of the excitement and satisfaction they felt at designing and implementing courses, and having these run successfully. These teachers prided themselves on their ability to adapt to challenges.

This study added to what is known about EFL teaching by confirming what other researchers (Alpaugh, 2015; Brundage, 2007; Christensen, 2014; T. Han & Mahzoun, 2017; Oliver, 2009) have found: that the major source of stress for EFL teachers comes from clashes with the administration or with superiors. This study extended the findings of the other studies by recognizing that the stories of clashes with the administration featured in the teachers' narratives of their resilience, in their narratives of caring for students, or in narratives of being true to themselves.

6.1.5 Teachers made their own professional development opportunities

The teachers in this study managed their own professional development opportunities. These came from teaching courses or teaching at different education levels (in primary, secondary, university, or private language classes) that they had not previously taught. Though the teachers all taught at university level at the time of the interviews, they had all taught at different levels in other workplaces. Lackey loved working in the Czech Republic because he taught different courses every day. He and his wife also took a pay cut to take on the teaching of a course they had not had experience with. John prided himself on being able to teach all sorts of courses at short notice, something he had been required to do when working in language teaching institutes.

Professional development opportunities came from designing courses: Gabriel and Lackey spoke of enjoying the opportunity to design and teach intensive teacher training courses, while Simon spoke of designing and redesigning courses he had taught till he was finally satisfied with them. Zahava and Beth prided themselves on successfully designing and implementing courses at short notice. Development opportunities also came from further studies completed while they were teaching EFL: James and Zahava had both worked on and completed doctorates, and all the teachers had completed Master's degrees in Education while teaching EFL. Their professional identity was therefore bound up in seeking out, taking on and successfully completing a variety of different professional development opportunities, either self-imposed or imposed by locals.

6.1.6 Teachers used their own experiences as a means of connecting with students

Teachers' past experiences affected their teaching in a number of ways. Firstly, the teachers' own language learning experiences influenced how they taught. Arielle and Lackey felt that their experiences of being bad language learners made them better teachers, because they understood and valued the effort students put into learning. John tried to build a range of activities into his classes because of his own experience of boredom when completing repetitive tasks when studying Japanese. He also used his knowledge of the length of time it took him to learn something he was studying in Japanese, to understand how long it would take his students to complete homework or learning tasks he set them. While Tsui's (2007a, 2007b) language teacher built on successful language learning experiences, these NES EFL teachers used their *least* successful language learning experiences to empower their teaching.

In addition, teachers referenced other life experiences to understand and meet students' needs. For example, John linked the greater distance students had to travel to class with the short distance he travelled to get less upset with students when they forgot their homework. Arielle and James linked the qualities they admired in their own teachers to qualities that they found important about their personalized teaching practices: a passion for their subject, an ability to explain, and developing rapport with the students. Arielle valued teachers who made time for students, and James valued teachers who listened to their students. Simon found that his experiences in management and administration were crucial to his teaching, by teaching him how to

plan, set goals, and work towards those, which, in teaching, meant goal setting to help students achieve a higher level of English proficiency.

Teachers also related their own life experiences to the students, to establish rapport and to help the students overcome their fears. Thus, Beth helped her students gain confidence when presenting by telling them of her own fears of speaking in public when she started teaching. This study confirmed what has previously been found: that teachers' past experiences are connected to their teaching (Bukor, 2013; Cooper & Olson, 1996; Golombek, 1998). Past learning experiences influenced how teachers approached their teaching and strengthened bonds with their students.

6.1.7 Teacher adaptability to different teaching contexts was crucial to successful teaching

The teachers in this study had developed the flexibility that comes with teaching experience. They had a wide range of strategies that they could employ in the classroom, thereby adapting sessions to meet their students' needs. For example, Zahava spoke of having the confidence to be flexible and modify a teaching plan that was not achieving its goal, and take the class in a different direction. In this, the EFL teachers did not differ from studies of subject teachers or teachers teaching in their own country (Berliner, 2004; O'Connor & Scanlon, 2005). However, what these NES EFL teachers added was an awareness of the importance of understanding and adapting quickly to the cultural context in the classroom. These experienced EFL teachers had taken the time to research the cultural context in which they were teaching, and the teaching advice they offered focused on adapting to the local cultural context to better meet students' needs. John acknowledged the time it took to adapt by pointing out that teachers tend to assume the students in the new country or workplace are similar to those they taught previously, and design the classes with the previous workplace in mind. Lackey added to this by talking of how the dynamic interactive classes he had designed for Korean students did not work, because he assumed, inadvertently, that his students had the learning experiences and language abilities of his students in New Zealand. Lackey also pointed out that teaching contexts differed between countries: the teacher learnt to adapt to meeting students daily at one workplace or weekly in another, and adapt to teaching different class sizes. All these required that the teacher adapt rapidly to the needs of the students in the new context.

In adapting to the teaching situation, the teachers highlighted the importance of doing research to understand the cultural context. John found it important to learn about the history of the country, to better understand the students and their needs. James refined that concept in recognising that the language and cultural distance between Western and Asian countries (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Nisbett, 2003) made it important to learn the cultural context of the Asian students. Beth and Lackey gave a specific example in referencing the importance of the group in Korean culture. They spoke of putting students in groups so that the students would share responsibility for each other's learning. Gabriel added a new dimension to the other teachers' words by stating that learning about the specific problems language learners from particular countries face was a quicker and more helpful way to connect with them than through the teacher learning the languages spoken by all of his students. The teachers believed that differences between Asian and Western cultures significantly impacted their teaching EFL. They worked at understanding and using such differences to help students learn.

Teachers enjoyed the challenges posed by different teaching situations. Lackey spoke of liking teaching different classes every day in the Czech Republic, and enjoying the challenge of planning and implementing a teacher training course in his first workplace in Korea. Gabriel and James had moved between several different jobs and challenges for most of their teaching lives. Zahava and Simon spoke of enjoying the opportunities they were given to plan and teach courses. In their stories, their ability to successfully teach a class, with little information given to them before to assist in planning the class, was seen as a professional strength.

6.2 National identity and other social identities

The second research question asked how teachers negotiated their relationship with their national identity and identity as a foreigner abroad. In [Chapter 2](#), the narrative of national identity was identified as being formed by a *mélange* of language, history, and culture, put to the service of forging a sense of shared destiny, national pride, and belonging. Immigrants to another country can react by integrating or assimilating into the country, or by separating themselves or remaining marginalized, depending on the power relationship between the immigrants and the locals (Berry, 1997). This study found a difference between the NES EFL teachers in Japan, who admired

Japan and wanted to remain there, and the teachers in Korea, who were more focused on maintaining their own national identity. Language learning was closely connected to a teacher's relationship with their home country and to the country they worked in. An issue with previous studies of EFL teachers has been the mixing of the experiences of NES and non-native English-speaking teachers (Johnston, 1997; Tsutsumi, 2013), or the voices of teachers with many years of experience with those of inexperienced or preservice teachers (Phillips, 1989), or studies with teachers who work in different countries (Gilman, 2016; Joun, 2015; Mullock, 2009). This study set distinct parameters: long-term NES EFL teachers who worked in South Korea or Japan, had taught English for at least ten years, and had taught in at least two different countries were selected for interviews. The parameters made it possible to look at the different teaching experiences of NES EFL teachers in South Korea, compared with NES EFL teachers in Japan. I discovered that the country made a difference. The experience of teachers teaching in Japan was qualitatively different to that of the teachers teaching in South Korea. The teachers in South Korea did not plan to stay indefinitely in the country, and chose to maintain a degree of distance from the local culture. All four teachers in Japan planned to live there as long as they possibly could. Cultural factors, such as the distance between the home country and the country they live and work in, therefore played a role in teachers' adaptations to the latter country. South Korea and Japan are fairly closely linked in terms of values and culture, with both sharing Confucian values (E. T. Hall, 1959; E. T. Hall & Hall, 1987; Hofstede et al., 2010; Ko et al., 2003; Nisbett, 2003; Sheridan, 1999), however, the adjustment of the NES EFL teachers to working in those countries was different.

6.2.1 Wanting to assimilate in Japan

The four teachers who worked in Japan: Arielle, John, Simon, and Zahava, all wanted to stay in Japan as long as possible. Three, Arielle, Simon, and Zahava, had Japanese partners. As per Nagatomo's (2014) study, having a Japanese partner was a significant motive in these teachers' desire to stay in Japan. Simon and Zahava had tenured university positions. All four spoke Japanese, and John, Simon and Zahava continued to study to improve their Japanese. Zahava spoke of having a cultural informant, who helped her understand Japanese culture. Arielle was experiencing an identity crisis at the time of the interview, wanting to be seen as Japanese, because

she regarded Japan as her home and had lived there for twenty-four years, but aware that she was regarded as a foreigner by the locals. John and Zahava spoke with admiration of Japanese society, and had negative opinions of their home countries. In their admiration for the country, their efforts to learn the language and to fit into the workplace culture, their expressed desire to stay in the country for the rest of their lives, and in the negative opinions two of the four teachers expressed about their home countries, as well as the alienation Arielle expressed about being in Britain, the teachers showed a shift in their identities, a desire to assimilate into Japanese culture and society. However, as has been pointed out (Berry, 1997; Y. Y. Kim, 2015a; Ralph & Staeheli, 2011), the integration process has to go two ways: the individual and the country they live in must both accept the claim of the individual to be ‘at home’ in the country. The four teachers were also all aware that they would not be accepted as Japanese by the Japanese people, because of the emphasis on homogeneity in Japanese culture, and the insular Japanese national identity (Kobayashi, 2011; Rivers & Ross, 2013).

6.2.2 Maintaining national identity in Korea

The four teachers in Korea: Beth, Gabriel, James and Lackey were not interested in assimilating into Korean culture. Beth left the country a week after the interview was conducted, to return to the USA. She linked this, in part, to being “invisible” in Korea, because her age made it unlikely she would be able to date in Korean society. Gabriel felt a deeper connection to Korea than to Japan, where he had also worked. However, like the others, he did not plan to stay in the country for many more years. He also explained that, even after understanding the cultural context, he chose to act in ways that were not in accordance with these, but met his needs. None of the four teachers planned to improve their ability to speak the Korean language. Beth felt that the language would have no use for her after she left the country. James relied on his wife to deal with interactions with Korean people and preferred to maintain his identity as an American. Lackey prioritized the maintenance of his family unit, and raising his children over learning Korean. James spoke of living in an “English ghetto” and not needing to speak Korean. The study confirms the findings of other studies, that NES EFL teachers living and working in Korea did not plan to spend a long time in Korea (Alpaugh, 2015) and had problems coping with the workplace

culture (Joun, 2015). It also shows that attitudes to learning the local language can be a good predictor of a teacher's investment in a country.

6.2.3 Language learning a reflection of the teacher's investment in a country

A desire to learn the local language, and the teacher's proficiency in speaking the local language, was strongly linked to their desire to stay in the country. The teachers in Japan, who planned to live in Japan for the rest of their lives, spoke Japanese, and continued to study to improve their mastery of the language, seeing it as key to helping them assimilate into the country. The teachers in Korea gave many reasons to explain why they had not learnt the local language. James and John had lived and worked in both Korea and Japan, and consciously linked their proficiency in each language to their investment in that country. John admired Japan and therefore wanted to continue to live there and master the language. James had lived in Japan for seven years, and spoke Japanese much better than he spoke Korean, stating that he was only living in Korea for his son's sake, and did not need to learn Korean.

6.2.4 Shifting away from ethnocentrism

The most common factor to emerge among the eight teachers was their heightened awareness of cultural differences, which was expressed as an enhanced understanding of different cultural contexts. Time spent in other cultures led the teachers to move from interpreting events through the lens of their own culture (ethnocentrism, J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004) to interpreting these through the lens of the local culture, and becoming more accepting of a plurality of cultural contexts (ethnorelativism, J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). James stated that, due to the various moves he had made as a child, he had always been attuned to cultural differences. The other teachers credited their shift away from ethnocentrism to time spent in the country, which had led them to be more tolerant of different ways of living, or of learning. John, Gabriel and Simon related their enriched cultural understanding to their personal lives and personal growth. John had learnt to accept that the people who live in a country as different as Japan have their individual way of doing things. Gabriel regarded his increased sense of awareness of different cultural contexts and ways of doing things as a gift that working in other countries had given him. Simon linked his stays in other countries to his personal growth, stating that he had learnt to be more flexible, tolerant and open-minded through

living in Turkey and Japan, countries very different to Canada. Arielle and Gabriel spoke of their shift away from ethnocentrism in terms of their teaching. They had learnt to understand and accept the Japanese or Korean way of teaching and to appreciate the benefits of a different pedagogical style. The findings confirmed what previous research (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Saint-Jacques, 2015) has found, that staying in other countries for long periods of time increased awareness of cultural differences and reduced ethnocentrism.

6.2.5 Noticing the boundedness of their own cultural contexts

Teaching in other countries helped teachers realize the boundedness of their own cultural milieu and put them in contact with different subcultures from their own country. In their ‘home’ countries, the teachers were likely to meet and form friendships only with people who shared similar backgrounds, beliefs, and lifestyles. Beth made specific reference to this, in talking about appreciating the opportunity Korea gave her to meet Americans she would not have met or socialized with while she lived in the US.

6.2.6 Criticizing the home country

Living and working in other countries gave the teachers a different, and, often, negative perspective of home country culture. Gabriel rued the inability of Americans to think outside their culturally conditioned understandings of the world. Zahava appreciated the food and the freedom in Canada, but couldn’t stand the rudeness and laziness of Canadians. John and his wife found Americans “fat and rude” and John spoke depreciatively of the American lifestyle: the indebtedness, the high taxes, and need for cars to get around, contrasting this with the great work conditions and lifestyle he enjoyed in both Japan and Korea.

6.3 Supplemental findings unrelated to the research questions

A benefit of using narrative inquiry and interviewing the teachers to develop a holistic picture of their lives was that the teachers’ stories included much more rich detail about their lives than could be easily compassed by the two research questions. Therefore, there were a number of other findings that did not relate directly to the research questions. These included: the intensive nature of teacher recruitment by Korean and Japanese schools in native English-speaking countries; how the English

language teaching job market is subject to market forces, the division of perceived language proficiency along national lines, and the importance of early experiences with other cultures in priming the teacher to look for jobs in other countries. The other findings are discussed below.

6.3.1 Intensive recruitment practices by Korean and Japanese language schools

Four of the teachers in South Korea and Japan found their first teaching jobs in their home countries through advertisements in newspapers or in books (John), through the university's job centre (Arielle, Zahava, James), or because of recruitment visits from agents working for language schools (James). These teachers found their first jobs in the days before these were widely advertised or found online. The various means of advertising, the focus on hiring recently graduated students, with no teaching experience, and the stories teachers told of interviewers that just wanted to know where to send the plane ticket (to paraphrase John), revealed the importance placed on the hiring of native English speakers in Japan and Korea (Alpaugh, 2015; DeChamplain, 2017; Kubota, 1998; Lawrence, 2016; Rivers, 2016).

6.3.2 Teachers responding to market forces

EFL and ESL teachers were at the mercy of market forces, with these playing an important role in the teachers' decisions to move between jobs and countries. Beth moved into teaching EFL because years of short contracts and underemployment in the USA left her looking for financial stability. She described the ESL job market in the USA as dependent on funding from governmental and non-governmental organisations for teaching English to immigrants or refugees. James moved from teaching job to teaching job in the various Asian republics funded by American governmental and non-governmental organisations. Lackey and his wife left New Zealand to work in Korea because the rise in value of the New Zealand dollar meant fewer Chinese students studying in New Zealand, so Lackey ended up earning much less than he had been when he first arrived in the country.

6.3.3 Well-equipped university classrooms in Korea and Japan

The teachers' classrooms in Korea and Japan were equipped with resources for audiovisual teaching and learning, and internet connections, as well as black or whiteboards. This meant that teachers had access to a greater variety of teaching tools. Zahava talked about regularly downloading and using videos in the classroom,

and having her students make their own short videos using free online software. Lackey spoke of being able to scan in the textbook and project the section he needed onto the board so that the students could all follow along.

6.3.4 Importance of the gap year in forming identity

The British gap year or trips overseas while at school or university were important for fostering a desire to travel and experience other cultures. Arielle and Lackey both spoke of their gap year jobs in schools overseas (Arielle taught in India, Lackey worked in a school in New Zealand) as changing their lives. Gabriel's eyes were opened to a wider world during his six month stay in Spain, and he spoke of this experience as a catalyst fueling his desire to travel the world. John was inspired by his stay in Germany to want to work in or with people from other cultures, which eventually led him into teaching EFL when he was unable to find jobs in the field of business.

6.3.5 Self-reporting of language proficiency differentiated along national lines

All eight teachers reported having studied another language during their schooling. The Canadian teachers, Simon and Zahava, had studied French in primary and secondary school and in university. The American teachers had studied another language in secondary school and university (Beth, Gabriel, John) or only in university (James). The two British teachers, Arielle and Lackey, had only studied a second language (French) in secondary school. Thus, there was a difference in the amount of exposure to other languages students in Britain, the USA and Canada received. This impacted upon the level of security teachers felt about their language learning abilities. The British teachers, who had had the least exposure to another language in their school days, were the most insecure about their language proficiency, with both describing themselves as bad language learners. The two Canadian teachers, who had had the most exposure to another language, were both confident about their ability to speak a second language. (They were also the two teachers most invested in developing their proficiency in speaking the local language – in their case, Japanese.)

6.3.6 Profound effects of the study on the researcher

My reflections on various topics that preoccupied me while conducting this study appeared between each chapter of this thesis. Two of the reflections ([*RI: Where are*](#)

[you really from?](#) and [R5: People just like me](#)) focused on self, other and questions of identity, belonging, and ethnic and national identity. Another two ([R2: Conflicted loyalties](#) and [R4: A letter to John](#)) focused on my time in Korea and my conflicting emotions regarding that time. In [R3: A tale of two interviews](#), I talked about learning, through firsthand experience, how the interviewer can affect the shape of the interview and how this experience crystallised my notions of how to act and react during the interviews. And, finally, in [R4: A letter to John](#), I also talked about how the interview with John proved to be a turning point in my life. The stories I told were stories of my personal identity in conflict. Like the teachers, I prioritized my personal life over my professional life.

First, there was the conflict between *self* and *Other*. Because I am always being interpreted and categorised by my skin colour and my features, I included a question on ethnicity in the questionnaire and in the interviews, and discovered two things. First, that white people do not face challenges to who they think they are on a daily basis. This engenders a certain confidence in claiming their own space, knowing that their claims will be accepted. My second realization was why being called ‘Indian’ bothers me. ‘Indian,’ to me, and to other people who use it to define me, is equated with the exotic *Other*, traditionalism, conservatism (especially religious), Hinduism, vegetarianism, and may include an implication of women who have little to no agency in their lives. To me, being ‘Australian’ gives me the power to choose my own path, to be who I think I am, and to be the active determiner of my life. I resist being called ‘Indian’ because I resist the implication that I am not in charge of my own life. This theme was, at its core, about fitting in and belonging, and the personal conflicts I experienced when I was seen as foreign where I felt I belonged, and seen as belonging where I felt foreign. This struggle echoed Arielle’s struggle with identity: feeling she belonged in Japan, but seen as foreign there, and being seen as a local in Australia, where she felt foreign. Our experiences highlight the importance of the *Other* in determining belonging: it is not only the person’s feelings towards the country (J. M. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Berry, 1997) that determine belonging, but also the way other people categorise that person (Berry, 1997; Ralph & Staeheli, 2011).

The second theme in the stories was my personal conflict when listening to critical statements about Korea, as in the interview with John. Listening to stories that were

critical or negative about Korea made me feel like I was being disloyal to the country. My sense of self had shifted to regard my town in Korea as one of my hometowns, and my gratitude to Korea made it difficult to listen to criticism of the country, because it brought to mind the problems I too had had with living in Korea. I was grateful to Korea for the wonderful quality of life I enjoyed, for freeing me from financial problems, for giving me membership into a professional development community and giving me the feeling I was giving something back to the country. The problem was not the criticism, the problem was being unable to refute it, because the stories resonated within me and reminded me of things that had happened to me, stories told by other foreigners in Korea, or events I'd witnessed. I experienced conflicting emotions that I still have problems reconciling: loyalty to Korea, for all the good things it had brought to my life, and empathy with John, a fellow EFL teacher, and someone who had also had negative experiences in Korea.

The third theme looked at the role of the interviewer. Being an interviewee gave me personal insight into the power the interviewer holds to shape the direction of the interview (Anyan, 2014). It modified my behaviour in subsequent interviews, where I tried to keep the questions as open as possible and cede as much power to the interviewee as possible. A downside of this was that my unwillingness to ask clarification questions or for further details with a general response meant that the interview with Arielle was very short as she was less open to sharing her life story than the other teachers.

Finally, the interview with John changed my life. His words came at a time when I was already trying to convince myself to make the sensible decision and stay in Korea. They made me realize that the country had already told me it was time to go. That I have a tenured position, and, finally, a home, a resting place, after 16 years of travels, comes from conducting this study, choosing to interview John – and hearing just what I needed to hear, when I needed to hear it.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The effectiveness of the study might have been limited by the following two factors: the limited number of people who responded to the questionnaire, and the focus of the study on the *stories* told by the teachers in response to the questionnaire and in the interviews. A study is also always limited by the biases of the researcher – and

my own experiences as a teacher and as a NES EFL teacher living and working in South Korea and familiar with Japan might have influenced the findings in ways that I was unable to recognise and acknowledge in this study.

6.4.1 Number of questionnaire respondents

The teachers who were interviewed were chosen from a pool of questionnaire respondents. Far fewer teachers responded to the questionnaire in Japan (11) as compared to South Korea (53), and the response rate was fairly low, compared to the numbers of NES EFL teachers in South Korea (36,793 people from the USA, Canada, the UK and Australia entered Korea on E2 teaching visas in 2011, Korea Immigration Service Ministry of Justice, 2011) and Japan (83,961 foreigners from the USA, Canada, the UK and Australia were legal residents in Japan in 2011, Ministry of Justice, 2014). The low response rate means that the stories told by these long-term NES EFL teachers might not be representative of the stories of all the long term NES EFL teachers working in South Korea or Japan.

6.4.2 Trustworthiness issues

The focus of the study was on the *stories* told by long term NES EFL teachers of their lives and experiences, with the emphasis being on the way in which they talked about their past and present lives and experiences. As such, the attempts made to confirm the teachers' stories were confined to investigating what is known about differences between the cultures the teachers came from and the cultures of South Korea and Japan, what is known about long term EFL teachers, and what is known about experienced teachers. The trustworthiness of the study would have been improved by collecting further data that corroborated or conflicted with the stories the teachers told. This data could have been collected by shadowing the teachers for a period of time to contrast what they said with what happened in their homes and workplaces, by having the teachers meet and discuss themes that arose in their individual stories, or by conducting follow up interviews with the teachers to discuss themes that arose in their stories in greater depth. I plan to conduct a follow up study with the same teachers (if they consent to participate), to ask them the same questions that were asked in the original interviews, so as to contrast their responses in 2011 with their responses in the follow up interviews and to build up a

longitudinal study of the way in which long term NES EFL teachers construct their selves.

6.4.3 Researcher biases

I wrote the research and interview questions, and transcribed and coded the interviews. Thus, a limitation of the study is that my findings are confined to those my own experiences have conditioned me to see. No other researchers were asked to (independently) code the transcripts. The coding and interpretations could thus have been affected by biases arising from my own experiences. To mitigate the effects of this, complete interview transcripts have been included with this thesis to enable other researchers to code and analyse the stories the teachers told.

6.5 Recommendations for further research

The narrative of chance predominates in studies of entry into EFL teaching (Johnston, 1997; Phillips, 1989), where teachers see teaching as a stopgap measure before returning to jobs in their home countries, or as a measure to finance further travel, and often lack any teaching qualifications before entering the field (Gilman, 2016; Johnston, 1997; Mullock, 2009). However, in this study, five of the eight teachers had completed studies in Education and planned to become teachers. (Only two of the 23 teachers Mullock (2009) interviewed had taken TESOL courses before falling into teaching, showing that EFL teaching was a detour from their planned career path. In Aguiar, Nam and Seong's (2015) study, four of the nine NESTs teaching at a Korean university had undergraduate degrees in Education.) Further research, to compare short and long-term NES EFL teachers, would be useful for the field, in particular to see if there is a difference in undergraduate education backgrounds between short and long-term NES EFL teachers.

Writing in 1997, Bill Johnston recommended that his study of the lives of EFL teachers in Poland be repeated in other countries. Part of the motivation for conducting this research came from Johnston's (1997) study. Johnston interviewed both native English speakers and non-native English speakers. This study focused solely on the stories of long-term native English speaker EFL teachers, working in South Korea or Japan. It is suggested that the study be repeated in other countries, such as Confucian-influenced China (D. Tang & Absalom, 1998; R. R. Wang, 2005), and in other parts of the world, by way of comparison.

One of the criticisms aimed at narrative inquiry is that it is limited by the subjectivities of the researcher (Peshkin, 1988). This study countered those criticisms by detailing how the study was conducted, acknowledging my own subjectivities and how these influenced the questions asked and the responses I received, and by using member checking, peer review, and an audit trail made up of journal entries as verification strategies. Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) speak of the importance of approaching language teacher identity using more than one theory. While working on this thesis, I was attracted to the idea of using different qualitative research approaches to analyse the same text, as per Wertz et al (2011). One approach that would complement this study in the future is to apply discourse analysis to the interviews. Another approach would be to have other researchers work with the same interviews and questionnaires, bringing their own analyses to the impact (on NESTs) of teaching EFL for a long time. A third suggestion for further research is for two or more long-term NES EFL teachers and researchers to work collaboratively, to analyse their own and each other's stories using alternative qualitative research approaches.

This study identified a distinct difference in the way the teachers teaching in South Korea and the teachers teaching in Japan regarded the countries they worked in. The teachers in Japan admired the country and wanted to stay indefinitely, while the teachers in Korea were focused on maintaining their distance from the country. The interviews were conducted in 2011, with some of the teachers (John and James) admitting that when they first started teaching, Japan was famous on the world stage, and this motivated them to take up job opportunities in the country. Since then, *Korea* has become well known on the world stage, predominantly culturally, thanks to the song Gangnam Style (Griggs, 2014), the pop group BTS (Wilkinson, 2018), and the *hallyu* wave (Hogarth, 2013; Joo, 2011; Roll, 2018; Williams, 2017) , but also politically, with the Koreas appearing regularly in the news (AFP, 2018; “Kim Jong-un crosses Korean border for summit,” 2018). My students in rural Mexico love Korean music and Korean dramas, and friends in other parts of the world confirm this passion for Korean culture among their students. I would like to recommend that the study be repeated, to see whether the greater role Korea plays now in the popular consciousness has created a different attitude towards the country among the NES EFL teachers currently working in South Korea.

6.6 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the stories long-term NES EFL teachers tell about their lives and work, in order to develop a deeper understanding of their sense of identity after living and working in one or more foreign countries for an extended period of time. In furthering that aim, the study found that personal factors such as relationships were important in teachers' decisions to stay in a particular country or to leave, and played a role in determining teachers' transnational movements. Teachers moved between ESL and EFL environments, between countries, and took up or changed jobs to facilitate their personal lives. While financial considerations prompted the move into teaching EFL, relationships (emotional considerations) kept teachers in the field. It is significant therefore that studies of NES EFL teachers focus on the personal to make sense of the professional lives of teachers.

NES EFL teachers are in high demand in Japan and South Korea, and many native English speakers enter these countries to teach every year, but only stay for a few years (Alpaugh, 2015), confirming what other studies have found about the EFL teaching field (Johnston, 1997; Phillips, 1989). Forming personal relationships with locals gives teachers the time and the desire to adapt to the local culture. This means that factors that determine which teachers will stay in EFL are often a matter of chance.

Having a reason to stay in the other country allowed teachers the time they needed to learn local cultural mores and taught them to enjoy taking on new challenges. Teachers enjoyed the challenges of living in other countries and reported that living in other countries had made them more culturally aware and helped them grow more than they would have grown had they stayed home.

This study provided a holistic look at the lives of long-term NES EFL teachers in Japan and Korea. It found that teachers in Korea focused on maintaining their national identity while teachers in Japan admired the country and planned to live there for as long as possible. Therefore, the country teachers worked in made a difference to the teachers' desire to assimilate. An important marker of investment into the country was the teacher's attitude towards learning the local language, with the teachers in Japan speaking, and working on improving their Japanese, while the teachers in Korea gave various reasons to explain their lack of interest or lack of

proficiency in the Korean language, generally relating their lack of proficiency to a lack of desire to stay in South Korea. Thus foreign language learning provided an accurate gauge of the teachers' investment in staying in a country. In the introduction to this thesis, the argument was made that this study would record a world that, according to Graddol (2006), was dying. Graddol (2006) saw NES EFL teachers being replaced by non-native English-speaking teachers teaching English in their own countries. However, this study found a continued strong demand for NES EFL teachers in South Korea and Japan. In discussing the lives and experiences of eight long-term NES EFL teachers, it gives teachers contemplating teaching EFL or new NES EFL teachers insight into the joys and challenges of teaching English in South Korea and Japan.

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Appendices

Appendix A1: The questionnaire

Page 1

Thank you for choosing to participate in this survey. The data from this survey will be used in part-fulfilment of the requirements to complete a Doctor of Education degree. The thesis title is "Constructing the self: Teachers' narratives of teaching EFL."

The purpose of this survey is to collect preliminary data about English language teachers in Korea and Japan: their backgrounds, current work situations, and their lives and experiences as teachers of English.

There are ten pages to this survey (including this one) and questions are generally multiple choice, or require short answers.

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. All of the questions require answers, except those on the last page.

Should you have any concern about the conduct of this research project, please contact the USQ Ethics Officer, Office of Research & Higher Degrees, University of Southern Queensland, West Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Telephone +61 7 4631 2690, email ethics@usq.edu.au

Thank you again for your help.

Maria Pinto

I have read the information provided above by the researcher, and choose to continue to complete this survey. Yes/ No

Page 2

The information you provide on this page will be used in data analysis. No personally identifying details will be used in the dissertation. If individual responses are discussed in the analysis, pseudonyms will be used to protect the identities of the respondents. You are given an opportunity here to choose your own preferred alias.

Preferred alias:

Age: Under 20, 20-24, 25-29, ..., 60-64, over 65

Gender: Male, Female

Nationality: American, Australian, Canadian, English, Irish, New Zealander, Scottish, South African, Welsh, Other (please specify)

How would you describe your ethnic background? [e.g. black British, third generation Australian (of Scottish descent), Lebanese American] *[This was a Comment field.]*

Page 3: Current workplace

This page asks you for information about your current and past work history.

Which country do you work in now? Korea, Japan, Other (please specify)

How long have you worked in that country?

How much longer do you think you will stay (continue to work) in that country?

Where do you currently teach English?: I only teach private classes, In a language school for children (hakwon in Korea), in my own (personally-owned) language school, in a middle school, in a university, in an elementary school, in a high school, in a language school for adults, other (please specify).

How long have you been at this workplace?: Less than 1 year, 1-2 years, 3-4 years, 5-6 years, 7-8 years, 9-10 years, more than 10 years

How many other foreign teachers do you work with? (i.e. how many other foreign teachers are there in your school?)

What is your average class size?

Which of the following facilities do you have in the classroom? (Tick all that apply.): Video/DVD watching facilities, Cassette/CD player, Computers for the students, Projector, Teacher's computer, with internet connection, Blackboard or whiteboard, Teacher's computer, no internet connection, Other (please specify)...

What do you like best about your current job?: relations with the administrative staff, relations with work colleagues, the holidays, the students, the teaching hours, the work conditions, the pay, other (please specify)

If you wish to provide further information about any of the questions on this page, please enter the information here. [*This was a Comment field.*]

Page 4: Education

This page collects information about your educational qualifications.

What was your undergraduate degree in?

Formal teaching qualifications. (Tick all that apply.) I have completed: CELTA, a TEFL/TESL certificate course, DELTA, a Bachelor of Education degree, a Master of Education degree, a Doctor of Education degree, Other (please specify).

Did you study any foreign languages at school? (Tick all that apply): Yes, at elementary school, Yes, at secondary school, Yes, at university, Yes, I took private classes, No, I did not study a foreign language at school, No, but my family speaks a language other than English at home, Other (please specify).

If you studied foreign languages at school, how were these predominantly taught?: Lectures, communicative activities and games, silent reading, listening activities only, a mix of the above.

Page 5: Past teaching experience

This page collects information on your past teaching experience.

Have you taught English (or another language) in any other countries?: Yes / No

Previous teaching workplaces: Which other countries have you taught English in? For how long did you live in each of those countries? Why did you leave? (E.g. El Salvador – 1 ½ years – better job) *[This was a Comment field.]*

How long have you been an English teacher?: Less than one year, 1-2 years, 3-4 years, ..., 9-10 years, more than 10 years.

How many countries have you taught in?: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, more than five.

Page 6: Language learning experiences

This page asks for information about your past and present language study / learning experiences.

What is your first language? *[This was a Comment field.]*

How many languages, other than English, do you speak?: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more

How well do you speak the languages you speak? (e.g. English – native speaker, Swahili – basic beginner level proficiency) *[This was a Comment field.]*

How old were you when you first started learning a second language (please write down your age in years). *[This was a Comment field.]*

Do you speak the native language of the country where you currently live?: Yes, fluently, Yes, sufficiently well for day-to-day interactions, No, not well enough for day-to-day interactions, No, not at all.

Are you studying the native language of the country where you live?: Yes, I am, Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past, No, I'm not and never have.

Please explain your answer. *[This was a Comment field.]*

Page 7: Language learning and teaching beliefs

Please complete these three sentences.

A good teacher is: *[This was a Comment field.]*

A good student is: *[This was a Comment field.]*

The easiest way to learn another language is: *[This was a Comment field.]*

Page 8: Living and working overseas

The questions on this page ask for your beliefs about living and working overseas.

Which of these factors was the most important to you in choosing to work in this country?: work conditions, standard of living, money, family connections / relationships.

What, to you, is the best thing about working in the country where you currently work? *[This was a Comment field.]*

What is the best thing about living in the country where you currently work? *[This was a Comment field.]*

What is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country? *[This was a Comment field.]*

What do you miss the most about your home country? *[This was a Comment field.]*

How, in your opinion, has living and working in another country changed you? *[This was a Comment field.]*

Please elaborate on your answers here, if you wish to. *[This was a Comment field.]*

Page 9: Keeping in touch

This page deals with different forms of technology.

As a means of facilitating communication with friends back home and in this country, how important are the following to you: a home landline phone, a mobile phone, internet access, video-chat facilities on your computer. (Not important, fairly important, very important)

I use the internet to: (Tick all that apply.): stay in touch with family (phone, email etc.), read newspapers from home/other countries, watch TV programs from home/other countries, shop, do my banking, book travel, plan classes, look for jobs, other (please specify)

I communicate with family and friends back home via: Phone text messages, Phone calls, Online chat (e.g. skype, messenger), Emails, Letters, Postcards. (Never, rarely, sometimes, often, always)

Page 10: Contact information (confidential)

Please fill out the name and contact email address information on this page if you are willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview. Your name and email address will be kept confidential and not used in any way to identify you.

Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview?: Yes / No

Name: [This was a Comment field.]

Email address: [This was a Comment field.]

Is there any further information you would like to add? [*This was a Comment field.*]

Appendix A2: The questionnaire, as it appeared in Survey Monkey

Screen snapshot: Page 1

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TtonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers Exit this survey

1. EFL Teacher survey

1 / 10 10%

Thank you for choosing to participate in this survey. The data from this survey will be used in part-fulfilment of the requirements to complete a Doctor of Education degree. The thesis title is "Constructing the self: Teachers' narratives of teaching EFL."

The purpose of this survey is to collect preliminary data about English language teachers in Korea and Japan: their backgrounds, current work situations, and their lives and experiences as teachers of English.

There are ten pages to this survey (including this one) and questions are generally multiple choice, or require short answers.

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. All of the questions require answers, except those on the last page.

If you would like to receive an emailed copy of the results of the data analysis, please indicate this on the last page of this questionnaire.

Should you have any concern about the conduct of this research project, please contact the USQ Ethics Officer, Office of Research & Higher Degrees, University of Southern Queensland, West Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Telephone +61 7 4631 2690, email ethics@usq.edu.au

Thank you again for your help.

Maria Pinto

*** 1. I have read the information provided above by the researcher, and choose to continue to complete this survey.**

Yes

No

Next

Screen snapshot: Page 2

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TtonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers Exit this survey

2. General information

2 / 10 20%

The information you provide on this page will be used in data analysis. No personally identifying details will be used in the dissertation. If individual responses are discussed in the analysis, pseudonyms will be used to protect the identities of the respondents. You are given an opportunity here to choose your own preferred alias.

1. Preferred alias:

*** 2. Age:**

Under 20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 45-50 50-54 55-59 60-64 Over 65

*** 3. Gender:**

Male Female

*** 4. Nationality:**

American English Scottish

Australian Irish South African

Canadian New Zealander (Kiw) Welsh

Other (please specify)

*** 5. How would you describe your ethnic background?**
[e.g. black British, third generation Australian (of Scottish descent), Lebanese American]

Screen snapshot: Page 3a

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJqpp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TonhcM0Hp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers Exit this survey

3. Current workplace

3 / 10 [Progress bar] 30%

This page asks you for information about your current and past work history.

*** 1. Current workplace: Which country do you work in now?**

Korea Japan

Other (please specify)

*** 2. How long have you worked in that country?**

*** 3. How much longer do you think you will stay (continue to teach) in that country?**

*** 4. Where do you currently teach English?**

In a language school for children (hakwon in Korea) I only teach private classes In a high school

In my own (personally-owned) language school In a language school for adults In a middle school

In a university In an elementary school

Other (please specify)

*** 5. How long have you worked at this workplace?**

Less than 1 year 5-6 years More than 10 years

1-2 years 7-8 years

Screen snapshot: Page 3b

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJqpp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TonhcM0Hp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

*** 6. How many other foreign teachers do you work with? (i.e. how many other foreign teachers are there in your school?)**

*** 7. What is your average class size?**

*** 8. Which of the following facilities do you have in the classroom? (Tick all that apply)**

Teacher's computer, with internet connection Projector Computers for the students

Video / DVD watching facilities Blackboard or whiteboard

Teacher's computer, no internet connection Cassette / CD player

Other (please specify)

*** 9. What do you like best about your current job?**

relations with the administrative staff the students

relations with work colleagues the teaching hours

the holidays the work conditions

the pay

Other (please specify)

10. If you wish to provide further information in regard to any of the questions on this page, please enter the information here.

Prev Next

Screen snapshot: Page 4a

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers [Exit this survey](#)

4. Education

4 / 10 40%

This page collects information about your educational qualifications.

*** 1. What was your undergraduate degree in?**

*** 2. Formal teaching qualifications. (Tick all that apply.)**
I have completed:

<input type="checkbox"/> CELTA	<input type="checkbox"/> a Bachelor of Education degree
<input type="checkbox"/> a TEFL / TESL certificate course	<input type="checkbox"/> a Master of Education degree
<input type="checkbox"/> DELTA	<input type="checkbox"/> a Doctor of Education degree
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	

*** 3. Did you study any foreign languages at school? (Tick all that apply.)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at elementary school.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I took private classes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at secondary school.	<input type="checkbox"/> No, I did not study a foreign language at school.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at university.	<input type="checkbox"/> No, but my family speaks a language other than English at home.
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	

*** 4. If you studied foreign languages at school, how were these (predominantly) taught?**

<input type="radio"/> Lectures	<input type="radio"/> Listening activities only
<input type="radio"/> Communicative activities and games	<input type="radio"/> A mix of the above

Screen snapshot: Page 4b

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers [Exit this survey](#)

4. Education

4 / 10 40%

This page collects information about your educational qualifications.

*** 1. What was your undergraduate degree in?**

*** 2. Formal teaching qualifications. (Tick all that apply.)**
I have completed:

<input type="checkbox"/> CELTA	<input type="checkbox"/> a Bachelor of Education degree
<input type="checkbox"/> a TEFL / TESL certificate course	<input type="checkbox"/> a Master of Education degree
<input type="checkbox"/> DELTA	<input type="checkbox"/> a Doctor of Education degree
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	

*** 3. Did you study any foreign languages at school? (Tick all that apply.)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at elementary school.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I took private classes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at secondary school.	<input type="checkbox"/> No, I did not study a foreign language at school.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at university.	<input type="checkbox"/> No, but my family speaks a language other than English at home.
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	

*** 4. If you studied foreign languages at school, how were these (predominantly) taught?**

<input type="radio"/> Lectures	<input type="radio"/> Listening activities only
<input type="radio"/> Communicative activities and games	<input checked="" type="radio"/> A mix of the above
<input type="radio"/> Silent reading	

Screen snapshot: Page 5

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJqpp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TnhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2
EFL teachers Exit this survey

5. Past teaching experience

5 / 10 ██████████ 50%

* 1. Have you taught English (or another language) in any other countries?
 Yes No

* 2. Previous teaching workplaces:
Which other countries have you taught English in?
For how long did you live in each of those countries?
Why did you leave?
(E.g. El Salvador - 1 1/2 years - better job)

* 3. How long have you been an English teacher?
 Less than one year 5-6 years more than ten years
 1-2 years 7-8 years
 3-4 years 9-10 years

* 4. How many countries have you taught in?
 1 4
 2 5
 3 More than five

Screen snapshot: Page 6a

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJqpp0Tiq%2bYFg%2TnhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2
EFL teachers Exit this survey

6. Language learning experiences

6 / 10 ██████████ 60%

This page asks for information about your past and present language study / learning experiences.

* 1. What is your first language?

* 2. How many languages, other than English, do you speak?
 0 3
 1 4
 2 5 or more

* 3. How well do you speak the languages you speak?
E.g.: English - native speaker
E.g.: Swahili - basic beginner level proficiency

* 4. How old were you when you first started learning a second language? (Please write down your age in years.)

* 5. Do you speak the native language of the country where you currently live?
 Yes, fluently. No, not well enough for day-to-day interactions
 Yes, sufficiently well for day-to-day interactions No, not at all.

* 6. Are you studying the native language of the country where you live?

Screen snapshot: Page 6b

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYFg%2fTonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

1 4

2 5 or more

*** 3. How well do you speak the languages you speak?**
E.g.: English - native speaker
E.g.: Swahili - basic beginner level proficiency

*** 4. How old were you when you first started learning a second language? (Please write down your age in years.)**

*** 5. Do you speak the native language of the country where you currently live?**

Yes, fluently. No, not well enough for day-to-day interactions

Yes, sufficiently well for day-to-day interactions No, not at all.

*** 6. Are you studying the native language of the country where you live?**

Yes, I am.

Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past.

No, I'm not and never have.

Please explain your answer.

Screen snapshot: Page 7

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYFg%2fTonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers [Exit this survey](#)

7. Language learning and teaching beliefs

7 / 10 70%

Please complete these three sentences.

*** 1. A good teacher is:**

*** 2. A good student is:**

*** 3. The easiest way to learn another language is:**

Screen snapshot: Page 8a

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJqppOTiq%2bYFg%2TtonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers Exit this survey

8. Living and working overseas

8 / 10 80%

The questions on this page ask for your beliefs about living and working overseas.

*** 1. Which of these factors was the most important to you in choosing to work in this country?**

Work conditions

Standard of living

Money

Family connections / relationships

Other (please specify)

*** 2. What, to you, is the best thing about WORKING in the country where you currently work?**

*** 3. What is the best thing about LIVING in the country where you currently work?**

*** 4. What is the MOST CHALLENGING aspect of living and working in another country?**

Screen snapshot: Page 8b

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJqppOTiq%2bYFg%2TtonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers

The questions on this page ask for your beliefs about living and working overseas.

*** 3. What is the best thing about LIVING in the country where you currently work?**

*** 4. What is the MOST CHALLENGING aspect of living and working in another country?**

*** 5. What do you miss the most about your home country?**

*** 6. How, in your opinion, has living and working in another country changed you?**

7. Please elaborate on your answers here, if you wish to.

Prev Next

Screen snapshot: Page 9

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYfg%2TonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers Exit this survey

9. Keeping in touch

9 / 10 90%

This page deals with different forms of technology.

*** 1. As a means of facilitating communication with friends back home and in this country, how important are the following to you?**

	Not important	Fairly important	Very important
A home landline phone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A mobile phone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video-chat facilities on your computer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** 2. I use the internet to: (Tick all that apply.)**

<input type="checkbox"/> stay in touch with family (phone, email etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> do my banking
<input type="checkbox"/> read newspapers from home/other countries	<input type="checkbox"/> book travel
<input type="checkbox"/> watch TV programs from home/other countries	<input type="checkbox"/> plan classes
<input type="checkbox"/> shop	<input type="checkbox"/> look for jobs
<input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify)	

*** 3. I communicate with family and friends back home via:**

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Phone text messages	<input type="radio"/>				
Phone calls	<input type="radio"/>				
Online chat (e.g. skype, messenger)	<input type="radio"/>				

Screen snapshot: Page 10

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] EFL teachers Survey - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTION&sm=BJapp0Tiq%2bYfg%2TonhcMOHp0sdK2Ew030VAPEIA%2

EFL teachers Exit this survey

10. Contact information (confidential)

10 / 10 100%

Please fill out the name and contact email address information on this page if you are willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview. Your name and email address will be kept confidential and not used in any way to identify you.

*** 1. Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview?**

Yes
 No

2. Would you like to receive the results of the data analysis of the survey? (Please write down your email address if you choose 'Yes').

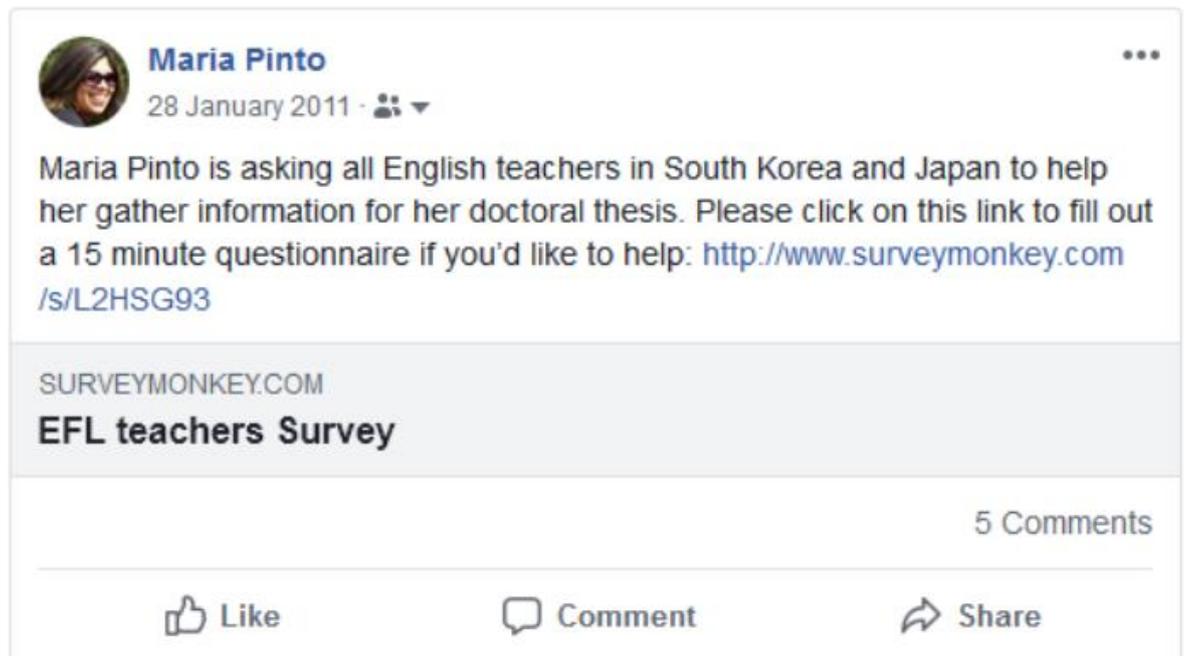
Yes
 No

3. Name (Please write your real name here if you are willing to participate in an interview.)

4. Email address (Please write your email address here if you are willing to participate in an interview.)

5. Is there any further information you would like to add?

Appendix B1: Facebook message



Maria Pinto
28 January 2011 · 2

Maria Pinto is asking all English teachers in South Korea and Japan to help her gather information for her doctoral thesis. Please click on this link to fill out a 15 minute questionnaire if you'd like to help: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L2HSG93>

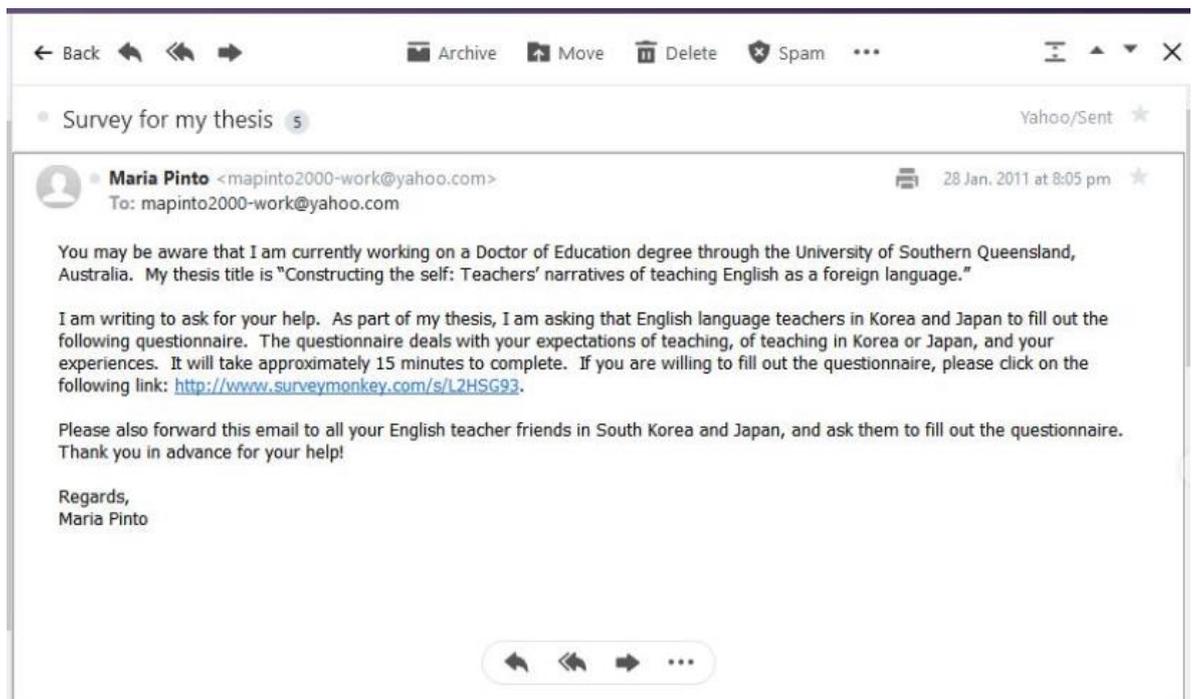
SURVEYMONKEY.COM
EFL teachers Survey

5 Comments

Like Comment Share

Note that the survey was sent out on the 29th of January 2011 from South Korea. As this screenshot was taken seven years later, from Mexico, the date appears as the 28th of January, due to the time difference between the two countries. The link to the survey was posted on Facebook twice, on the 29th of January, and on the 5th of February, 2011.

Appendix B2: Email re survey



Survey for my thesis 5 Yahoo/Sent

Maria Pinto <mapinto2000-work@yahoo.com>
To: mapinto2000-work@yahoo.com 28 Jan. 2011 at 8:05 pm

You may be aware that I am currently working on a Doctor of Education degree through the University of Southern Queensland, Australia. My thesis title is "Constructing the self: Teachers' narratives of teaching English as a foreign language."

I am writing to ask for your help. As part of my thesis, I am asking that English language teachers in Korea and Japan to fill out the following questionnaire. The questionnaire deals with your expectations of teaching, of teaching in Korea or Japan, and your experiences. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. If you are willing to fill out the questionnaire, please click on the following link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L2HSG93>.

Please also forward this email to all your English teacher friends in South Korea and Japan, and ask them to fill out the questionnaire. Thank you in advance for your help!

Regards,
Maria Pinto

Appendix C: Interview questions

A pdf version of the question sheet sent to the teachers a week before the interviews appears below.

Interview questions

(Note: These questions form a starting point for the interview.)

1. Could you tell me about your background.
 - a. Tell me about your past. Where are you from? Where did you grow up?
 - b. How would you describe your ethnic background?
2. Why did you become a teacher?
 - a. What teaching tools / tricks do you consider to be indispensable?
 - b. What teaching principles underpin your teaching? What has changed?
 - c. How would you describe your teaching self? Why? (e.g. teacher, professor)
 - d. How have your ideas about teaching changed? (over time / from country to country)
 - e. What do you remember of your own school days? Who was/were the teacher/s who influenced you the most when you were in school? Why?
3. How long have you been teaching EFL?
 - a. Which countries have you worked in?
 - b. Please describe the places/environments you have worked in.
 - c. Which country / workplace was the most memorable? Why?
4. *(The two questions following appeared in the survey. You will be asked to elaborate further on your answers there.)*
 - a. What is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country?
 - b. How, in your opinion, has living and working in another country changed you?
 - i. Do you speak the local language? Why (did you choose to learn/not learn it)?
 - ii. How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live? Why?

Appendix D: Interview informed consent

Dear _____,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

This interview is designed to look at the lives and experiences of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers. The interview will be recorded, using an mp3 player. Questions will relate to your experiences teaching English and living in a foreign country. Data collected in this interview will be analysed and written up in part-fulfilment of the requirements of a Doctor of Education degree through the University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

If you wish, at any stage, to withdraw permission for the data collected in this (recorded) interview to be used in any way, please email the author of the study, Maria Pinto, at maevid_is@yahoo.com to withdraw consent. If you withdraw consent, no information provided by you will be included in the study.

Should you have any concern about the conduct of this research project, please contact the USQ Ethics Officer, Office of Research & Higher Degrees, University of Southern Queensland, West Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Telephone +61 7 4631 2690, email ethics@usq.edu.au.

Please indicate consent to participating in this study by signing the form below and returning it by mail to: Maria Pinto, Dongguk University Liberal Arts Department, Seokjangdong #707, Gyeongju, Gyeongbuk Province, South Korea 780-714, or as a scanned email attachment to: maevid_is@yahoo.com.

Regards,

Maria Pinto

Interview informed consent

I am aware that Maria Pinto ("the researcher"), will be using the data gathered from the Survey Monkey questionnaire that I filled out and a recorded interview with me, to write a report that will contribute toward the completion of her doctoral course requirements at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, and that this report will be read by her supervisor and course examiner(s). I am also aware that data collected by the researcher may be shared by the researcher with her supervisor.

I hereby agree to:

- participate in the research project.
- allow the data collected in the questionnaire previously filled out, this recorded interview and subsequent recorded interviews that may be carried out, and any other recorded meetings, emails or conversations where the researcher and I are both participants to be used by the researcher in writing her doctoral course report.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the project at any time, and that should I withdraw any data gathered from me in the questionnaire (where such data is not used for statistical purposes but is used in discussions or to provide examples) or recorded interviews and other communication with the researcher will be disposed of in accordance with my wishes: remain available to the researcher or destroyed should I request it. Any data gathered in recorded meetings or interviews that involved additional people will still remain

available to the researcher and to the other participants in the group, even if I withdraw from the project.

I understand that, should I request to remain anonymous, every effort to protect my anonymity will be made and that data collected from this project will be securely stored and remain confidential.

I understand that I will be provided with a copy of the report when it is completed, and will have the opportunity to read and comment upon it before submission.

I understand that, should I have any concern about the conduct of this research project, I can contact the USQ Ethics Officer, Office of Research & Higher Degrees, University of Southern Queensland, West Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350, Telephone +61 7 4631 2690, email ethics@usq.edu.au.

Name:

Telephone/Email:

Date:

Signature:

Appendix E: Electronic copy of the questionnaire responses and interview transcripts for each teacher

Appendix E1: Arielle's answers to the questionnaire

Age	45-50
Gender	Female
Nationality	English
Ethnic background (self-description)	white British
Current country/workplace	Japan
Length of time in that country	24 years
Plans to stay in that country for	Probably until retirement.
Current ELT workplace	In a university
Length of time at current workplace	More than 10 years
Like best about current workplace	the students
Undergrad degree in	English Language
Formal teaching qualifications	a TEFL / TESL certificate course a Master of Education degree
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at secondary school.
How studied	A mix of the above
Teaching	Yes
Previous teaching workplaces	Britain, 6 weeks, it was a temporary summer job during university. Britain, 3 months, during teacher training.
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	2
First language	English
Languages spoken	1
Proficiency in languages spoken	English - native speaker Japanese - near-native speaker in most everyday situations.
When started language learning	11
Native language of country where they work	Yes, fluently.

Student of native language	Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past. I would like to improve my Japanese reading and writing skills.
A good teacher is	a facilitator.
A good student is	motivated.
Easiest way to learn another language is	to use it.
Best thing about working overseas	I am respected and well-paid.
Best thing about living overseas	I love the area I live in.
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	Cultural differences.
Miss most about home country	Being able to function in my native language.
How has living and working in another country changed you?	It has widened my point of view, enabling me to view issues from different cultural perspectives.

Appendix E1: Transcript of the interview with Arielle

Note: Workplace and city names have been removed or changed to a description, in order to help maintain Arielle's privacy.

Maria: Okay do I have your permission to record this, Arielle?

Arielle: Yes.

Maria: This is an interview with Arielle on the 5th of August, 2011. Okay. Arielle, to start off with, could you tell me about your background?

Arielle: Okay. I'm from England originally, from a very small town, no, no, I'm from the middle of nowhere actually, in the east of England.

Maria: Okay. And could you tell me about your past? Everything - start from you know birth and work onwards from there

Arielle: Okay, right. (laughs) Well basically I grew up in a very rural area but was lucky enough to go to some very good schools and had some very excellent teachers who stretched our minds and, when I was eighteen, when I left school, I went to India for a year as a volunteer, and there I was very lucky enough to work in an extremely exceptional experimental school .. and that turned me on to teaching, becoming a teacher.

Maria: Yeah okay. Why then did you decide to become a teacher? You said it was an experimental school?

Arielle: Because I - well I discovered I liked teaching but also I realized how important education was - it was something I'd taken completely for granted until that point - it was something that everybody had in England but in India I realised that's not the case for everybody .. especially for girls - how important education is...

Maria: Why did you end up going to India?

Arielle: Because we were doing Kim at A level (laughs)

Maria: Okay. Okay (laughs) good reason.

Arielle: Yeah definitely

Maria: Okay so was this, that sounded like your gap year trip?

Arielle: Yes.

Maria: So which countries have you worked in?

Arielle: *Worked* in officially only Japan actually. And England briefly, very briefly, summer jobs.

Maria: In India it wasn't an official job or...?

Arielle: Well, it was a voluntary program.

Maria: How long did you stay in India for?

Arielle: A year.

Maria: Right. Could you tell me about the workplaces that you worked in?

Arielle: Okay. When I first came to Japan I was on the JET program. Oh before that my first teaching job was a summer school in England, teaching mostly Italian students college students. That was like a - two months - well it was just a summer job - and then my first real job was here as an ALT on the JET program, so I was working in a high school - senior high school. I did that for a year but it nearly drove me nuts so I quit, but then I came back and I worked in a private conversation school

for a few months, which also nearly drove me equally nuts (laughs) and then we moved to (*name of city*) where I found a very good full time job in another private conversation school and also worked part-time at the university. And then we moved to (*city where she currently lives*) – these moves were because of my husband’s job and after we moved to (*the city where she currently lives*) I’d just had my daughter so she was a baby so I didn’t work for a few months which also drove me nuts (laughs), so I managed to find a job – I taught a little privately but I didn’t like doing that - I found a job at a private high school which I liked and I worked there for six years part time - it was part time but actually it was quite full time: I had a lot of hours and a good relationship with the staff and students there and then gradually over the years I started picking up part time work at universities in the city which eventually led to me being offered a full time job at (*name of university*), which is where I work now.

Maria: Which country or which workplace would you say was the most memorable, and why?

Arielle: The most memorable - India definitely, because it was my first and it was ... the school was such an exceptional place to be and it changed my whole view of life and education.

Maria: How so- you mean just that education isn’t a right for some people?

Arielle: Yeah, and not just that but also the philosophy behind the school was very free school - what’s the name of the school in England, it’s near where I live actually, can’t remember it (pause) - I can get back to you with the reference – but, anyway, it was based on the whole idea of free school: you don’t have to be there if you don’t want to be, but obviously for those children it was a great opportunity - they all wanted to be there. And it was a very small school, it was a very small community, the age groups were all in together in one classroom and it was very multilingual: so the children’s mother tongue and the state tongue was different so they already had to learn two languages, right, but also, in the classroom, English was used and they also learnt Sanskrit and Hindi if they wanted to, so it was just amazing...

Maria: What would that be – quinilingual?

Arielle: (laughs) Yeah, and there’s me coming from (*name of place*) in England where everybody is white and everybody speaks one language – not having to learn ...

Maria: Okay. What- So- this is a question about Japan. Why did you decide to come to Japan?

Arielle: Oh, money, to go back to India. I actually wanted to be an ESL teacher at that point in my life when I finished university, and I had a job in inner London which would’ve been mainly teaching Bangladeshi children at that point, but I also had a small college loan and (*the university where she did her undergraduate degree*) has a Japanese department and was advertising the JET program very heavily and I thought, well that’s intriguing - it’s not a place I thought I wanted to go to but, as a year in a public school system, which is quite difficult to get into normally, right, and the money was exceptionally good so that I thought, oh all right, that might be interesting for a year - so just curiosity and money basically.

Maria: And you ended up staying

Arielle: Yes. Yes. But my ultimate goal was possibly ... I thought I could save some money and go back to India

Maria: What was your university degree in?

Arielle: English language and then I did the PGCE for ESL/EFL, teaching high school.

Maria: Okay coming back to teaching then, what teaching tools or tricks do you consider to be indispensable?

Arielle: Yeah, I don't know, I was thinking about that. (pause) Tricks - I don't think I have any. Kind of curious about what other people answered to that. Tools. (pause)

Maria: Anything you find yourself using again and again in the classroom?

Arielle: Well, you mean like activities? Well...

Maria: Could be or things that you've taken from one workplace that have stuck with you as a good way to teach, that you've used again and again.

Arielle: (pause) Well, I was trying to think about this earlier. Maybe just activities that make the students have to find out information about each other that they don't know already, which is hard in my classrooms because they know each other pretty well. So yeah, that kind of ... that teaching....

Maria: What teaching principles underpin your teaching?

Arielle: (laughs) Well, when I trained it was all communicative language teaching so that was my basis originally. But, also, based on what I've learnt in India as well at the school there - which was very free school - and then doing my MA and becoming interested in cognitive psychology maybe and interactionism... But those were the things I already think I believed - I didn't have a framework for the framework- my MA gave me a framework for that, yeah, so originally that's where I'm coming from.

Maria: And, has anything changed in your approach to teaching?

Arielle: (laughs) Yeah, practicalities. I think I've mellowed over the years. I'm less scornful of the Japanese way of teaching than I used to be. I realize that you can't just bring one cultural educational pedagogy and plonk it on some other system.

Maria: How would you describe your teaching self?

Arielle: Oh, I'm a teacher. Oh, I'd like to think of myself as a language facilitator- no, what was it, a learning facilitator that's what I am as a teacher

Maria: Why learning facilitator?

Arielle: Because I like to think I help the students learn how to learn, as well as how to learn the language. And to learn about themselves as well, because I know I learn a lot about myself by learning about other languages and other cultures.

Maria: How have your ideas about teaching changed?

Arielle: Like I said, I've probably become less didactic, mellower, (pause). Yeah I realise there's different ways to do things and well, for example, I use Japanese a lot now in the classroom whereas I didn't ... think... Well I don't know, I mean when I trained we were using bilingual system in Britain, in ESL, which I thought was a good idea at the time and then I- for a while I thought I shouldn't use Japanese in the classroom but now I do a lot, you know, things like that I'm not trying to force students to do things which they might not be comfortable with just because it's my language theory

Maria: How do you use Japanese in the classroom?

Arielle: It's mostly for rapport. It used to be mostly for rapport but these days I- because I teach a lot of students whose major isn't English and who are very actually scared or dislike English, I use it to explain more as well. And I may even be

translating a lot more than I realise, probably I need to record myself one of these days and find out.

Maria: How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live?

Arielle: I think it's pretty important.

Maria: Why?

Arielle: I think if you're there for any period of time - more than a year maybe - a year or two - then, if you can't speak the language then it - I think it's a bad example for the students: for one thing why is this person not speaking the language, but also just to understand what it's like to be the language learner for one reason. I'm actually very bad at languages and the fact that I can speak Japanese never fails to astound me (laughs). So I struggle with language, and I think that, having gone through the struggle of learning the language has helped me understand what my students, especially some of my weaker students, might be going through. I'm also very self-conscious and I don't like speaking, for example, in front of people who speak better Japanese than me, so I can understand how my more insecure students may feel perhaps? Because, in those respects it's helped me, as a teacher. But also just practical things, like understanding how Japanese and English are different, and why my students are making the mistakes they do.

Maria: How well do you speak Japanese?

Arielle: (laughs) Not as well as I'd like but yeah. I don't normally ... I do unless it's something completely out of my topic like nuclear physics or something- it's been a long time. Speaking - I don't read it or write it really well - perhaps I should. Yeah, at home, our language is Japanese.

Maria: Would you say that your husband and your daughter are bilingual? Equally fluent in both?

Arielle: No. no. Mostly Japanese. My daughter is, I would say, a receptive bilingual, and depending on the topic as well, (*my husband*) is.

Maria: What, to you, is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country?

Arielle: Oh, that's right, that was on the questionnaire wasn't it? And I don't remember what I said. So, ...

Maria: I think you said the culture (I looked at it yesterday) cultural differences.

Arielle: Right! Ah, yeah! My problem right now is, having been here so long, that I no longer know what my cultural identity is and so, dealing with that on a day-to-day basis can sometimes be quite stressful, because people obviously see me and see a foreigner whereas for me this is my home and my family is here- I've spent most of my life here now. Right now that's one of the things I struggle with, yeah. But still this ... cultural nuances that I probably- still don't understand even after all this time.

Maria: How do you think your cultural identity is - why do you think your cultural identity is ... a struggle to find that the modern...

Arielle: Maybe because I'm not sure what I want to be anymore. I mean I kind of - obviously I can never be Japanese. ... But at the same time I have lived outside of Britain for so long, when I go back there, I don't really feel at home. I mean I feel at home in one sense - it's my family, my hometown, whatever, but it's not quite (pause) natural anymore and I go to Australia and the weird thing is, everybody

thinks I'm Australian, right, and I feel completely foreign and that's when I noticed it, because here I feel normal and at home but everybody sees a foreigner, in Australia, everybody sees a native and I'm there, standing there, feeling like a foreigner –that (pause) that - not paradox, it's, yeah, been making me think recently

Maria: All right. How in your opinion has living and working in another country changed you?

Arielle: Oh, completely, completely (laughs), yeah. I think it's definitely made me a better, stronger person, broadened my horizons no end, (pause) yeah. But going to India did that. Completely changed me.

Maria: Coming to Japan?

Arielle: Yeah, there was some resistance at first. Because I didn't like it. It was not Asia, and I felt very American. It took a little while for me to realize the Japanese aspect of life here (pause)- yeah, coming to Japan has brought me, it's made me more (pause) more observant perhaps, more patient, more careful (laughs, pause). (pause) yeah. (pause)

Maria: Only a couple more questions

Arielle: Okay, no, I was just trying to think about that – such a deep question.

Maria: No, no it's fine. What do you remember most of your own schooldays?

Arielle: Oh, my fantastic teachers. I had the most incredible teachers.

Maria: Who were the teachers who influenced you the most, and why?

Arielle: In particular three English teachers because they introduced us to amazing works of English literature and also the ideas behind them, and my Biology teacher who (pause) who turned out to be a jerk but (laughs) - who turned out to be a disappointment in his private life but yeah, no he was an excellent teacher, he really inspired us.

Maria: What was it about their teaching that you found inspiring?

Arielle: I think that they were obviously very in love with their own subject. That's probably it. Yeah.

Maria: Okay, and ...

Arielle: And very good at articulating their ideas, so. And a good rapport with the students. Which are probably three things I think are important about teaching when I come to think of that.

Maria: Okay and how would you describe your ethnic background?

Arielle: Oh, Western European (laughs)

Maria: Since we were talking about identity, cultural identity.

Arielle: Basically I'm English but I'd like to think of myself as European. (laughs)

Maria: Yeah, okay. (pause) Did you have anything to add to ... living and working in another country or any of the other questions?

Arielle: There was something and it's just flown out of my mind. (pause) Yeah, I - it's a good question about how has Japan changed me. I think it's changed my ideas about education and that there isn't just one way to do the job and one way just really doesn't suit everybody.

Maria: And how long have you been teaching in Japan?

Arielle: 24 years. (laughs)

Maria: Well, thank you very much.

Arielle: Thank you, Maria, for making me think about my life more deeply.

Appendix E2: Beth's answers to the questionnaire

Age	45-50
Gender	Female
Nationality	American
Ethnic background (self-description)	white american (Irish and Russian/Jewish descent)
Current country/workplace	Korea
Length of time in that country	3.5 years
Plans to stay in that country for	1.5 years
Current ELT workplace	In a university
Length of time at current workplace	1-2 years
Like best about current workplace	the students
Undergrad degree in	Women's Studies
Formal teaching qualifications	a Master of Education degree
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at secondary school. Yes, at university.
How studied	A mix of the above
Teaching	Yes
Previous teaching workplaces	I taught ESL in the U.S. for almost 15 years, in social service and nonprofit organizations and community colleges. I left because of the poor job market.
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	2
First language	English
Languages spoken	1
Proficiency in languages spoken	English - native speaker Spanish - competent
When started language learning	13
Native language of country where they work	No, not well enough for day-to-day interactions
Student of native language	Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past. I have taken beginner classes twice. I had to stop them because of time and health constraints but would like to study again if possible.

A good teacher is	always learning
A good student is	engaged and motivated
Easiest way to learn another language is	by using it.
Best thing about working overseas	steady employment
Best thing about living overseas	a chance to experience another culture and meet new people
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	not speaking the language
Miss most about home country	friends and family
How has living and working in another country changed you?	It's made me stronger because I've overcome challenges

Appendix E2: Transcript of the interview with Beth

Note: Other than Seoul, workplace and city names have been removed or changed to a description, in order to help maintain Beth's privacy.

Maria: Okay, this is an interview with Beth on the 28th of June 2011. Beth, do I have your permission to record this interview?

Beth: Yes you do.

Maria: Thank you very much. Okay. All right. First off, could you tell me a little bit about your background?

Beth: My teaching background, I assume?

Maria: Nope, your entire background.

Beth: My entire background. My life background.

Maria: Yeah.

Beth: Ok. Let's see. I'm American. I grew up mostly in (*name of city*), I was born in 1961, I studied at (*name of university*) out on the West Coast and also at (*another university*). I've been in the English teaching field since 1991.

Maria: Ok. How would you describe your ethnic background? Over here in your survey you did mention 'white American, Irish and Russian Jewish descent'

Beth: Yeah, oh that's true (both laugh). It's - actually, there's a funny anecdote that I just thought of - it's a little bit off topic but I had students in my undergraduate classes recently, they were writing about characters in the TV show Glee, that I love to use to teach, and they were comparing a couple of guys and they wrote 'One is American the other is Jewish' (both laugh) and then somebody else wrote 'One is Jewish but his friend is white.' So it's an interesting thing - here in Korea people have different ideas about what that means. So, on surveys like on the Census and so forth, usually I say White, but it - to me ethnic is a little different from racial and my father's side of the family is Jewish, my grandparents on his side were the immigrant generation - hence the Russian part - and my mom's side was Irish but came to the US in the 19th century, so I don't really know how Irish they consider themselves anymore.

Maria: Why did you become a teacher?

Beth: I sort of fell into it by accident to be honest, and then realised that I really liked it and it was a good fit. ... In - I think it was 1990 - I had been out of school for a few years at that point because I graduated in '85 - I had worked in social services and then I moved over and I was working in small press publishing and that was a better fit than social services because I've always been a big reader and a book person and so on. But, you know, just sort of - as fate would have it, at that time there was a recession going on in (*the large city where she lived*). I lost my job, I was looking for work and the place where I very first started teaching was a refugee resettlement agency and they hired people who weren't trained teachers if they were college graduates - actually it's a lot like Korea... (laughs) - they were college graduates and had studied another language as well, and then they did on the job training - in particular methodology and so on. And this is '91 when the Soviet Union was collapsing and so tens of thousands of people were coming over from there and that's who my first students were and I found out that, as I said, that I liked it - and this doesn't sound very modest, but I was good at it and so I stayed.

Maria: You said you spoke more than one other language? Which other language did you speak? Or do you speak?

Beth: Do I speak? I speak Spanish competently if not fluently because it was the language I studied throughout junior high school and high school in the States - you know we have to have a second language. And I also found that I often had occasion to use it in my jobs. But the first foreign language I studied was Hebrew (long pause), and all I remember now are a few blessings (laughs), but in preparation for having a bat mitzvah then. So then Spanish after that, in junior high and high school, French for a couple years in high school, and then Russian for a year at (*her first university*) yeah. But the only one I could claim to have a conversation in now is Spanish (pause) and a little bit of Korean I've learned here you know (laughs).

Maria: Ok So how long have you been teaching EFL?

Beth: If by EFL you mean English outside of the US where it - or outside of the country in which it's a first language, just my four years here in Korea yeah.

Maria: But you've been teaching for a very long time right?

Beth: Yeah

Maria: So, how many years' experience do you have in ESL?

Beth: Let's see. (pause) As I mentioned before - I always say I began in '91 because I remember that and there were a couple of years when I stepped out - I had moved away for personal reasons, I was in grad school, so there were maybe (pause) four - it'd be four years since then when I haven't been teaching or administering like you know running programs, supervising teachers, and stuff like that. So, '91-'01 - that would make it - that would be 20 years minus the four

Maria: Wow

Beth: I know wow! I can't believe I'm that old! (laughs) So approximately 15-16 years.

Maria: What, to you, are the differences between EFL and ESL?

Beth: There are so many. Let's see (pause). The first thing that comes to mind is - for EFL, like for the students here, they don't have the same urgency for learning because they don't need it outside of the classroom - except these days they need their TOEIC scores for their jobs - so I think in some ways that may make them less motivated, and they also just don't have the opportunities outside of the classroom, which is unfortunate but, ESL, I had a variety of different kinds of students actually in the States - a lot of them were adults - actually they were all adults. A lot of them were immigrants - either recent or who had been there for quite a while - who were highly motivated because they needed either survival English - it was very newly arrived people with very low level language or English to further themselves professionally and just to make life easier in the States you know, so they were largely economically motivated, and of course they had opportunities everywhere. -- Although opportunity is not required because there are so many different enclaves where you can walk around the street and everybody's speaking only Russian or only Spanish or only Polish or only Chinese - whatever in (*the city*) but if you want to speak English it's there too (laughs)

Maria: How have you changed as a teacher?

Beth: How have I changed (laughs)? Let's see (pause). (pause) Well the first thing that came to my mind is I feel sort of like a cultural ambassador here in a way. Like in teaching language, I'm often teaching American culture - ironically because we're

not in the US but (pause) maybe also for that reason it's like I'm the representative or something. So if I'm using - again I go back to the film class - when I use popular TV, I have to explain a lot of the culture references and stuff because the students here won't see that necessarily, although they do watch American TV shows, but I don't know that that's about how I've changed as a teacher. (pause) Just a moment, let me think about it (long pause). I can assume less knowledge on the part of the students. Again, going back to the idea that we're not in an English-speaking country, not exposed to it all the time so I find that I have to sort of back up and slow down a little bit compared to what I might've done at home, where people would have simply absorbed a lot just from the atmosphere yeah.

Maria: Are there any teaching tools or tricks that you've learned over the past twenty years (laugh) that you think are indispensable?

Beth: Indispensable. Well, tools or tricks? Tools or tricks

Maria: Either ... and both

Beth: I'm just trying to think - what do those mean - what do tools and tricks mean?

Maria: Anything. Any teaching tools, anything that you wouldn't travel with- sort of you know don't leave home without it.

Beth: (laughs) Aha okay. Well when I was having a phone interview recently for the job that I just got (pause) and one of the people interviewing me asked what do I think is most important for a teacher and I said patience. I don't know that that's a tool or trick but I certainly think it's been indispensable for me just in terms of the attitude that I bring to the teaching to the classroom to the students, humour also yeah (laughs), but it seems to me like you ask more about like techniques or pedagogy-

Maria: It could be either - you know it's what you think that you couldn't do without as a teacher.

Beth: Mhm mhm yeah (pause) Things like materials and resources - they're nice but they're not all essential, you know. And if you know what your goal is and who you're working with, you can, for the most part, develop what you need to use in class I think, so, to me, it's more like the abstract things like the attitudes. I think over all this time (pause) - I've learnt how to - I think and I hope - to realistically assess the classroom situation by which I mean who are the learners, by which I mean like what's motivating them, what's their language level and so forth, what resources do they have access to, and then the very basics like how many hours a week I'm going to see them, and so on, and take it from there - create whatever I need to create.

Maria: What teaching principles do you think underpin your teaching? You mentioned patience, humour would you say that that's for you the bedrock that you start with? And has this changed over time or over different workplaces?

Beth: Let's see. Well I think patience and humour are more like attributes. Principles I think - I mean this may sound sort of idealistic or Pollyanna but it's about I think empowering the learners helping them become able to get as much as they can out of the process, however that best needs to happen, given who they are, and who I am, and the situation that we're in. And sometimes that means helping them learn enough English to write a good résumé, sometimes that means helping them learn how to take the subway or work on their TOEIC study skills or whatever you know: it depends who they are. But yeah, I definitely think it's about helping them reach their

potential however that happens. And you asked something (about) principles that - how I've changed or my teaching's changed or something

Maria: Yeah. How have your principles as a teacher changed or how have you as a teacher changed over the years?

Beth: Ok. Well as with most things I suppose (pause) over time you gain more confidence with experience, if you're doing something that you like and should be doing right (chuckles), otherwise you just get burnt out and bitter but I love teaching, so yeah when I first started - I still tell my students this sometimes because I've been teaching - last couple of years - presentation English classes and they're always nervous and I always say, "you know I remember when I first started teaching I was always nervous, I was terrified," and they're always surprised and (laugh) and they say, "really?" and I say, "just because I've been doing this since you were toddlers (laughs) - that I don't feel nervous all the time any more" (pause). I've learnt to I think (pause) evaluate my own process better in a way. Like when I first started, as I mentioned I was in a job where teaching experience or teaching training wasn't required and they trained us in what I now look back like with horror was audiolingual: listen-repeat, listen-repeat, listen-repeat, memorise, and - oh yeah makes me shudder now (laughs) - but it was - from the point of view of the agency, it was a sort of quick and dirty way to get bodies in the classroom and thousands of refugees through the system, and I just sort of accepted it as a good method because they told me it was and I didn't know any better. Over time, having observed lots of other kinds of teaching and taught myself more, I realized that it was sort of horrible (laughs) ... but going back to what you're saying about my teaching changed or my principles about teaching changed (pause). I don't feel like I know what the best method is even now, after all these years, but I think I have the tools to critically analyse whatever method's being used and think about what's working, what's not working and, yeah, be able to come up with what whatever method needs to be put into place in a situation. Does that follow?

Maria: Yeah, yeah it does.

Beth: Okay.

Maria: So another difficult question for you – how would you describe your teaching self? It can be something simple like a word 'teacher,' professor or it can be however you choose to describe it.

Beth: Ok. (long pause) Again - I don't need this to sound immodest - but I've gotten really positive feedback recently from students here who tend to say things like "wow I never felt comfortable with the teacher who is friendly and nice to us before." (laughs) And I know there's culture differences between Western and Asian styles and typically here teachers are more at a distance and there's more of a hierarchical authority thing going on, and, on the one hand, it warms my heart like, "oh thanks I'm glad you like me and feel comfortable with me," and on the other it sort of breaks my heart, because I think they've always been afraid of teachers - like nobody's ever been nurturing to them before? How sad is that?

Maria: I think teachers do have a lot invested in keeping their distance here.

Beth: Mm good point yeah yeah. I notice - I mean this is sort of a sidebar but, when I've tried to do that, it hasn't worked because it's not who I am (laughs). And I'm not talking about here but years ago, when I was working with the Russian speakers in (*the US city where she used to teach*) - and there were only two classes I feel like I've ever had in all these years that just were disastrous and just where I just lost

control of the class were - one was an all-female high level class, and one was all male and very multi-level and the group of men, they were (pause) - they had been really engineers and in technical fields in the Soviet Union and then, because of their lack of English, they were now having to work at sort of lower level jobs: they were learning to how to do like washing machine repair and stuff. But the reason that they came to my mind is that I had been warned by other people in the same agency - you know "these guys are like tough customers," you know (laugh) - "the Russians, they expect very authoritative teaching, they want you to give them specific grammar rules and they will misbehave if you let them because they'll decide that you're young and you're female and they don't have to pay attention to you," and so I went in and I tried to be really stern you know and not smile and so on and it just didn't last because it's not me you know (laughs). And toward the end of the semester - actually no I'm sorry that class I did, I gave up that class, I asked a male co-worker to take them and I switched - but the following group, they said, "oh you started off always looking serious at the beginning of the term but now - now you're all friendly and relaxed and we like you better this way" (laughs).

Maria: So it's kind of be true to yourself as a ...

Beth: Exactly. Yeah, yeah.

Maria: Ok... What do you remember of your own school days? Who were the teachers who influenced you the most when you were in school?

Beth: Any age?

Maria: Any age.

Beth: When I was in high school I had - first of all, I had this wonderful English teacher, she taught the Honours class kids my senior year and she had this very prim look with you know, her tweed suit and her glasses on the string, the whole thing - but what I remember liking about her was I think she assumed the best of us. I mean granted, it was the Honours class so she figured we were going to be good but I mean we actually enjoyed reading like Hawthorne (laughs) because she got us engaged and we were just old enough to be able to have intellectual debate that made sense, and she took us seriously. I had another high school teacher - it wasn't language though - it was Social Studies - but I still remember him because the way he influenced me was (pause) - how to put it - (pause) he exposed us to other perspectives on the world basically, it was like I think the class was like non-Western history or something like that and he was somebody vivid. He was like basically a '60s product you know: he backpacked around India and the whole thing and ... but this - you know we were in the well-to-do suburbs and everybody's parents were like doctors and lawyers and bankers and so on and we had no clue about the world beyond that cocoon and he introduced it in a way that got me thinking. I remember writing a paper about Gandhi for him so (pause) - those are the two that come to my mind (laugh) the most - the high school years are very formative you know (laughs)

Maria: Well I mean you're talking about somebody who like was friendly and - both of them - so it's basically so it sounds like you brought them back into your own teaching...

Beth: I hope so (laughs) yeah yeah

Maria: Ok, all right, now this goes back to your teaching workplaces.

Beth: Ok.

Maria: Which teaching workplace or which country has been the most memorable? So workplace and or country and why

Beth: Ok well I've only taught in two countries you know here and the US - memorable (pause) - do I have to choose one? (laughs)

Maria: You can choose more than one, but you have to explain them. I have the time if you have the time

Beth: Okay (laughs). The very first place I taught - that I mentioned with the horrible audiolingual classes - I would still say is the most memorable for a few reasons. I was there longer than any other job: I was there four to five years and, as I said, it was my first exposure to teaching, and even though (pause) they had these methods that I don't think so much of ... that's where I got like the taste for it and realised that I was good at it, enjoyed it. And I still remember this one student, this middle-aged Russian guy - I had substituted for his regular teacher because she was out sick and so I went in on a fairly short notice but I saw what she'd been doing in the textbook and sort of came up with a lesson plan and did it and he came up to me after and he said - you know, in Russian, they don't have articles - so he said, "Miss, please stay, you are artist" (laughs) and I thought it was so cute so I - that's the thing that keeps me going about teaching, it absolutely is, the students' response, their gratitude. It was also kind of a feeling of personal connection because I would tell the students, "you know my grandparents came from where you came from" and you know and it was mostly Jewish - I'm stumbling over the terminology because it gets complicated there but what they would say was, in Russia, we were Jews, in America, we're Russians (laughs), so that's who they were anyway. So there was this sort of sense of a little bit of shared history but that's not what made it memorable - what made it most memorable was that I was there for the longest time of my teaching career (despite it having been a long career so far) and that it was my first teaching gig. I think my (pause) - see (pause) I don't know whether this is because it's most recent - but my last job probably will also stick with me quite a while. This is the first time that I was teaching undergraduate-aged learners, I'd always taught adults in the States and then even here my first two years I was doing in-service training for Korean English teachers so they were also adults and I really enjoyed the energy of the young people that I was working with at (*name of university in Korea*) and I mean, even though sometimes it was distracting energy - sometimes it was, you know, kids flirting with each other in the corner whatever - but mostly it was enthusiastic energy and I really enjoyed that, and that's a big reason I'm looking forward to the next job because it'll be the same age group and just in the States but still Asian students.

Maria: Yeah. Could you tell me a bit about your Korean workplaces? You mentioned the first one was teacher training and the second one was university?

Beth: Right yeah yeah. That's it - just those two. The first one, it was (*name of*) University, the graduate school of education. They had just begun this program where they were doing - well they were doing a lot of things - like personally I think too many things and somewhat disorganised - but the main thing they were doing that I was working on was in-service training, in other words, teachers who were already you know in the middle of their careers getting training for teaching English: other methods than memorise grammar you know and it was an intensive program. I was in the classroom my first year, I think, it's 25 hours a week. It was a lot and students were there even a little bit more than that. I was teaching - again I think perhaps too many things - I was teaching them, let's see, techniques for teaching

writing - did some special topics about using music and video but I also taught them just from the high level integrated series - what was it - NorthStar Reading and Writing and that was kind of working on their own English skills in addition to their teaching skills. While I was there the university also launched a program for a TESOL certificate and that was a weekend thing and I taught some of that - I taught a materials development course for that. I found it really hard because they were training these people to teach young learners and I've never taught young learners (laughs) and I felt like I was faking it a lot you know and then it was sort of embarrassing and I felt also not effective like I was trying to teach them something that I hadn't done. Anyway they also started a Master's program while I was there and I taught a not-very-successful writing course with them - and I say not very successful because I feel like I wasn't sure what the goals were - and that's one of the things I find frustrating when I'm in a job - if I don't have latitude to totally create it but I don't know what the goal is that I'm supposed to reach, then I sort of muddle along and, anyway the first time you teach anything it's sloppy. So that was my first job here. And then I chose to leave because I found it too stressful to be honest: it was a - partly I think because it's new because the sort of revamping the whole English teacher training thing here they - by they I mean the Korean government and whoever oversees this - and then the universities they work with don't really know what they want to do yet I think, so there was a lot of last minute total change of direction and then last minute total change again, and so I didn't feel like I could do my best work and so I chose to leave. Also I wanted to leave (*the city she lived in*) and move to Seoul so I took the position at (*a university in Seoul*) that I have just left now and that's - rather than teacher training, it's working with the undergraduates in the English language and literature department. And the downside was, I had bigger classes than I've ever had before - my first year I had a couple classes with 70 students in it - and I felt badly for those students because I don't feel like they can get enough, you know. The second year, the biggest I had was 50 so - that or nearly, I would say oh my god - but then it seems like after 70, it was no problem (laughs)

Maria: Was that Conversation classes?

Beth: No oh thank god (pause). It was the cinema English class and then a CNN Listening class. The large size though I think partly goes to (pause) ... how language learning is perceived here, which I think is still: whoever makes the decisions about these things may still have this idea that students sit and listen and memorise (laughs) and instead of the idea that you have interaction and production of language you know in a language classroom, but, aside from that, the large class - I had a very positive experience, a very positive experience at the university. I taught, as I mentioned, presentation, English debate, cinema, business English, practical writing. I did an advanced Conversation class with some Grad students, and I did a TOEIC writing class - I think that's it. It was a lot.

Maria: So a huge range of different subjects in class ...

Beth: Yeah yeah

Maria: How did you end up in EFL teaching? I mean, you'd been working in the US for several years, how did you suddenly end up in Korea?

Beth: Right. Well to be honest, it was an economic decision (pause). The job market at home wasn't good and I had been either out of work, or under employed, or about to lose my job so many times in recent years, I got frustrated and decided I had to make a radical change (laugh) and - I think this also kind of speaks to issues in the profession as a whole (pause) - people have often said to me, well what do you mean,

you couldn't get a job teaching English to non-English speakers in (*the large American city where she taught*), the city is full of non-English speakers? - which is true, but there's no steady funding for teaching them. You know I mentioned that my first teaching was with the refugees coming from the Soviet Union as it split into the various republics - that's all money from a couple of charities that want to do refugee resettlement, and after that wave of immigration has passed, that money is gone and they look for the next thing, and sometimes there would be like what's it called - I'm looking for a term what is it - displaced workers, like people whose jobs had been phased out for one reason or another, and there would be some government money for short-term programs to get them retrained. I did that at one of the new community colleges - it was mostly people who had worked in the garment industry and had been phased out for whatever reason. It was really challenging because there was a huge level disparity in the classroom. So sometimes there would be temporary money for something like that. There was a fund that was developed also, called the September 11 fund - which you can imagine what that was related to - and people who had lost their jobs, who had been (pause) - mostly, actually, there were a lot of garment workers, and also a lot of service personnel, like people who used to work in the restaurants and so forth were getting retraining and - I don't mean this to sound callous at all but what happens is, after a disaster has passed, the funding for people who were affected by it has passed, and their job is gone, you know (laughs). So like for the 9/11 fund I was supervising a group of teachers and training them and overseeing just the day to day of the program and we had - again I don't know several hundred if not a couple of thousand - I can't think back now - students who passed through you know, and then it was done yeah... So after a lot of years of those kinds of stops and starts and stops and starts I figured I had to do something different and so I came here.

Maria: Why Korea?

Beth: (pause) This sounds awful but it looked like the pay was better than elsewhere (laughs)

Maria: I think a lot of us come here for that reason so...

Beth: Ok It's honest, it's honest (laughs). I mean I was a little bit curious my sister-in-law is Korean American, so I was a little bit curious based on having talked to her, but the primary factor was financial.

Maria: And why are you going back to the US then?

Beth: I feel like it's time, I miss friends and family (pause). I liked my last job here a lot and if, you know, if they paid me so much money that I could fly home more often you know and see people, then perhaps you know I would have considered staying but (pause). Yeah I miss seeing people more often and also - to be honest I find it... not so much now as when I first got here... but even so, isolating here, particularly at my age and as a single person you know. I figured if I ever want to date again, I probably should go elsewhere. (laughs) It sounds awful but, you know, we were talking earlier - there's like the phenomenon of the Western men with the Korean wives but there's kind of like no flip version of it and I feel just invisible you know, and that gets old yeah (laughs)

Maria: There are again lots and lots of foreign women who leave for the same reason and so ... My next question was going to be about the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country but I think you just answered that or would you like to elaborate on that?

Beth: I answered it by mentioning isolation?

Maria: The isolation, and friends and family

Beth: Right right (pause). Well unfortunately I don't have other foreign countries to compare my experience here to, I mean, had I gone for example to a Spanish-speaking country would have been a different experience because I would have been able to understand the language around me and therefore probably felt a lot less isolated, and I already had at least some familiarity with the culture you know just from you know knowing Puerto Rican and Dominican and Cuban and Mexican friends and co-workers and so on, so I guess connecting those - the isolation in language - I mean part of it is my own fault because I didn't learn more Korean while I was here - but a piece that was also challenging for me was food - as a vegetarian it was very challenging here to eat the way I want to yeah.

Maria: Yeah. How in your opinion has living and working in another country changed you?

Beth: I think it's toughened me (laughs) in a good way - in that I mean I already thought of myself as a strong person but I think (pause) coming here on my own was one of the most challenging things I've ever done and it was hard especially at the beginning but I did it and I got through it and so now I feel like oh wow I can do all kinds of stuff! It's also broadened my horizons, I think. I mentioned a few minutes ago the social studies teacher who exposed us to other parts of the world and, (*people from my city*) like, we think we're so cosmopolitan because it's an international city and so on but often we don't leave we just think, 'oh we're so cool everybody comes here' - but I met people here who I wouldn't have met had I stayed home - other Americans I would just not have run into, like people connected with the US military, or other teachers who've lived in other countries like yourself, and, a lot of the people - a lot of the foreigners who are here travel a lot and have interesting stories and so, makes me think oh, that sounds like a cool place, maybe I'll go do that at some point in the future. And, had I not come here, first of all I wouldn't have learnt about whatever X school place was from talking to whoever the person was, but also I would've had less of an idea that, 'oh yeah I could do that.' Now I know I could because I already did, here, you know. I mean there are places I really have no desire to go and work but I have the feeling like if I wanted to, I probably could most places, yeah.

Maria: Yeah. All right, and then moving on, the last couple of questions they're all about language now. And you mentioned that you don't really speak Korean. Why did you choose not to learn it? Did you choose not to learn it?

Beth: (laughs) Did I choose not to learn it. I feel like (pause) it was more like a decision by omission or by default. I started to learn it a couple of times and I enjoyed it and felt like it wasn't too hard to learn, and what happened both times was - well, the first time actually. (pause) I'm wrong. I started to learn it three times (laughs). The first time when I still lived in (*my first city in Korea*) and it was just a little while after I had just arrived and I was all gung ho and it was kind of like the survival Korean level, like I need to know how to just do daily stuff. And I found a class that was held at a nearby foreign language high school and I started going and I wound up dropping out just for lack of time and energy - my first job here was so time-consuming and I was so exhausted at the end of the day, and usually I worked late and couldn't make it to the Korean class, so I wound up dropping out. Then, when I moved to Seoul, I found a really great class, and I had this wonderful teacher - I still remember her and, more or less the same thing happened - the first time I was

there with her, in that I started off really gung ho and then my time and energy just sort of faded away because work was demanding - and sometimes I hear myself say that and I think, well (pause) you know, Korean students, they do this full time, 20 hours a day, how do they manage, and then I just say well, you know, I'm a lot older than they are and I'm Western, I just don't know how (laughs). And, but I was really really glad though that I took that class, because I did learn first of all the Hangeul alphabet (laughs), so I can read signs, and basic phrases that you need to know like how to ask for cost and things like that, or give directions. My last time - my ever valid excuse, because I was taking the class for a third time, and then I had to leave because I had to go into surgery and you know yeah. (laughs) You know, so that's what happened, yeah, and then another piece though is, I discovered that although it's not smooth, you can survive here without it - I mean at least particularly in a big city like Seoul, and when I leave Korea I'm not likely to need Korean again, but I feel more like I wish I had learned more because it would have made life easier and my experience less isolating and I wouldn't have felt quite so much like an ugly American you know assuming that the rest of the world should cater to us and speak English and do everything in English you know, but then we're willing to meet people half way you know.

Maria: Okay, last question. How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they work? Or in which they live?

Beth: Hmm. (long pause) If - that depends on important for what -? For their daily life? For their students' progress? For their (pause) supervisors' evaluation of them? For...

Maria: It's your choice. Any or all of the above.

Beth: It's my choice, okay (laughs). I don't think it's necessary for the classroom. I don't think the teacher has to speak the first language of the students and, granted I say that not having taught absolute beginners here but I have taught you know absolute beginners in the States in English only and it works, it can be done you know, and here - I mean these little kids right over here - I'm sure they're already learning English in grade school so almost nobody gets into the classroom without having something to start with - at least in the classrooms that I would've been in- so I don't think it's necessary for the classroom. I think (pause) -- *the question wasn't the best way, the question was important* -- I think the reasons it would be important for foreign teachers are the personal and social ones that I mentioned, you know, it's easier to navigate in the host country and you know the better we can do that, the more we can connect with the - (pause) I want to say the local people but that sounds like I'm a tourist - but you know what I mean, the people in whose country we are staying (laughs) you know. Uhm (pause) The easier it is for us, and the better impression I think they would get of us. I worry sometimes that Koreans have a negative impression of foreigners who come and don't even try to meet them part way by speaking any English and so I think - I think it's important for that, you know.

Maria: Okay, well thank you very much.

Beth: You're very welcome (laughs).

Maria: Thank you.

Appendix E3: Gabriel's answers to the questionnaire

Age	30-34
Gender	Male
Nationality	American
Ethnic background (self-description)	White
Current country/workplace	Korea
Length of time in that country	6 years
Plans to stay in that country for	at least 2 years
Current ELT workplace	In a university
Length of time at current workplace	Less than 1 year
Like best about current workplace	the work conditions
Undergrad degree in	History
Formal teaching qualifications	CELTA (MATESOL)
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at secondary school. Yes, at university.
How studied	A mix of the above
Teaching	Yes
Previous teaching workplaces	Japan 3 years (wanted to come back to Korea)
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	2
First language	English
Languages spoken	2
Proficiency in languages spoken	Spanish-intermediate; Korean advanced beginner
When started language learning	12
Native language of country where they work	Yes, sufficiently well for day-to-day interactions
Student of native language	Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past.
A good teacher is	Reflective
A good student is	curious
Easiest way to learn another	through a combination of language and fluency focus

language is	
Best thing about working overseas	The great opportunities for advancement.
Best thing about living overseas	The food and the people.
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	Cultural differences and chances for misunderstandings and conflicts between expectations.
Miss most about home country	Friends and family.
How has living and working in another country changed you?	I think that I have become much more adaptable (mentally and physically)

Appendix E3: Transcript of the interview with Gabriel

Note: Other than Seoul, workplace and city names have been removed or changed to a description, in order to help maintain Gabriel's privacy.

Maria: This is an interview with Gabriel on the 12th of August, 2011. Gabriel, do I have your permission to record this?

Gabriel: Permission granted.

Maria: Thank you. Okay, all right, could you tell me a little bit about your background?

Gabriel: Sure, um. I'm from the States, from the east coast, Connecticut. I'm from a really small town, 18,000 people in that town, lots of white people, lots of mixed people. I went to public school -- as you know in America, the regular school -- um I mean you don't pay to go to public school.

Maria: As opposed to the British idea of a public school being a private school, okay.

Gabriel: Yeah. Um so yeah, I grew up in a small town, I lived there till I was 18, dare I say typical suburban American kind of thing.

Maria: And when you were 18, you left?

Gabriel: I went to university in Maine, like rural States, another small town, I sort of went there cos it was the first place that accepted me to go and I was like, "ah I don't have to make any decisions, this is where I'm going, this is where I'm going to college." So I was in I was in Maine for four years after Conn- so Maine is much more rural than Connecticut -- I was in Maine for four years in the middle of nowhere, wolves, long winters, and I went to Spain in 1999 to study abroad and I was like, "oh shit like there was this whole world out there, I gotta do something - what am I gonna do? Well I don't have much money so I gotta work. What am I gonna do?" -- I guess I'm sorta leading ahead -- so, "what am I gonna do? All right, so let's think about this, okay teaching English I like, I think it'll be fun." I don't know, I originally went to school -- my first declared major was Education in university but that was just a ploy to get into college, cos there's not a -- typically, men don't apply to study Education, and my grades were really horrible, and so, I thought if I listed as Education, then I'll surely be accepted, and that was true -- well, I don't know if that's the reason, but ... so then so my original major was Education, but I didn't -- I kept it only for the first semester, and I changed to History -- and History was sort of just my first thing that I was interested in, I just liked it, and I thought, you know, worst case, I'll be a History teacher. I didn't really want to be a History teacher, it was kind of like fall back, fall, eight fall back steps and I can be a History teacher. I wanted to go to Law School at the time, and so then I went to Spain because I needed Spanish -- requirement to graduate and I sort of just caught the travel bug.

Maria: Okay. So, when you went to Spain, were you planning to work there? Was it supposed to be a holiday, or an exchange?

Gabriel: Exchange. Study abroad for six months.

Maria: Where were you in Spain?

Gabriel: In (*a fairly large city*). And I was studying -- in my major I needed to have a certain requirement of Spanish and I realized it was really quite hard to have and the teachers were quite horrible too, like I needed 800 level, which is like junior level of Spanish, called Intermediate I guess -- and I just realized that it would be much easier to just go to Spain than do it in America, and so I took all these History

Politics classes in Spanish and it was just eye-opening, cos my Spanish was just horrible when I arrived but then I figured it out, and they helped us, made it easier but it was really eye opening, in many many ways.

Maria: How long did you stay in Spain for?

Gabriel: Just six months.

Maria: Six months?

Gabriel: Yeah. Studying for four or five of them and travelling for a month.

Maria: Yeah. And then, where did you go from there?

Gabriel: Went back to school for my whole senior year and again it was – it's a rural place in the north, the most northeast part of America and it was kind of dark because it was like I'd seen this whole wide world out there, and I'm back, transplanted here, I wanted to study abroad for a year, I couldn't - dragged my feet setting it all up so I only went spring my junior year so then I kind of put this dramatic year of like changing – totally changing my plan into – “now I can't just go to Law School, I can't just get a job, I can't just do whatever everybody else is doing” - and so I took – what'd I do? I was broke and so – backtracking a little – part of the reason I went to my university is cos of – although my grades were horrible, they offered me to be in the Honours program because my test scores were high and I wrote an essay that was pretty - inflammatory I guess, I don't know what it was, but they were like, “okay this guy is kind of different, he just doesn't care about school,” so, in -- my major was History, I had to write sort of a thesis, an undergraduate thesis thing, and History was like, “oh you know what? Actually we don't count the Honours thesis, you have to do your own for History as well,” so I thought, I kind of thought it was just a waste of time, so I thought, “you know I'm not gonna write two History theses here, I'm gonna write something else, I don't know what I'm gonna do, but History is - this is the part where you're dead to me because you're making me write two, if I only had to write one, I could make one super-special one and use it for both, but I'm not doing that,” And so, on around that same time, I decided to take a class on teaching, it was a TESOL class, and it was just really cool and everything just sort of locked into place I was like, “wow, I could do this thesis!” I met one of the teachers there, he was the director of the English language program, he was teaching the class for people who wanted to be TESOL teachers and we really hit it off, and I just – “do you want to be my advisor for this Honours thing?” - What? You don't know anything about this field! and he was like, “yeah, sure, why not!” and so - that was sort of my first introduction to teaching anything really - and so I wrote this sort of horrible thesis (laughs) of what I would do, how I would teach Spanish students, if I were given the opportunity, based on my six months there, it was an interesting experience, yeah.

Maria: Okay. So, then from there did you decide to move into ESL or EFL or what happened?

Gabriel: Yeah, I was thinking “what am I gonna do? It's not gonna be in America,” so I just hung around - February of the year I graduated, which was 2000, I was starting to look for jobs all around, my debts climbed, this woman that I worked with, she was –I worked in the Study Abroad office, sort of spreading the gospel of studying abroad, and there was a woman in the office next to me, she was-- I didn't actually know what she was doing, but she was a graduate student doing something and she had her own office there, and we hit it off, and she had just come back from Korea, she sort of sold me on Korea as an idea – she was actually in Ulsan, she was

like, “no I think this is - you know, you’re talking all this stuff about travelling, why not just try it out for a year?” And around February I sent out a bunch of emails - maybe 50 emails - to various jobs I saw, and the one that really caught my eye was a Canadian guy was writing about his job in (*a small Korean city*), and he was really honest about the whole thing he was like, “well, you know, it’s not perfect but, what is? I mean it’s not perfect, but what is perfect?” And, from there I was like, “this is the guy – I trust this guy,” you know recruiters are all you know -- so from there I was like, “all right, I’ve got my plan decided, I’m gonna graduate in May and I’m gonna go to Korea in June.” And so that’s what I did, and my plan was five countries in five years – and then I’ll get serious about whatever and then Law School will still be there if I so choose, if not, whatever, but five countries, five years, Korea’s one of them - South America, Eastern Europe, Middle East, one option – this was the plan – of a 20, 22, 23 year old with some wanderlust. So I was there in June, June 2000, finished my year at a *hagwon*, sort of a split shift sort of thing, then I had a girlfriend, Canadian girlfriend who was in town so I was like, “well I’m not really going to leave yet,” ended up staying for another year and a half.

Maria: In the *hagwon*?

Gabriel: No, in a- I got another job, in (*the same small city*), at a small college, like a technical college kind of thing. And then - so yes, I stayed in (*this small city*) for two and a half years. I guess you know (*the city*) – kind of small city. And then from there, I was 25, and I’d been in (*this small Korean city*) for two and a half years and I was like this - I loved my job – it was pretty good in terms of the conditions and things you know but I was just like I didn’t do all this so I could live in a small town for such a long time, I’m 25, I’ve been here two and a half years, that’s 10% of my life, it’s 80% of my adult non-college life, I need to do something different. So, at that point, I had saved up a bunch of money so I decided to take 2003 off -- not going to work, just gonna travel around most of Asia, south East Asia, and that was basically what I did – came back to Korea for a camp, summer camp, winter camp, and then...where was I –

Maria: Uh, you travelled in 2003 summer camp, winter camp

Gabriel: And then so yeah, travelled around , had an interesting experience, sort of spent more money than I wanted to but not disastrously.

Maria: South east Asia?

Gabriel: Mostly, yeah, China as well. Back to Korea in the summer, back to Korea in the winter. Home as well, went to the States. So then ... 2004, I decided I wasn’t quite following my plan - well – it was already three, four years even, decided I wanted to go to Japan. Although Japan wasn’t interesting to me originally when I was first thinking about things, it suddenly became very interesting. And so then I applied for a job in Japan in Tokyo and I got it and then I had a couple of months before it started so I did the CELTA in Bangkok and then I worked in Japan - pretty good job – the job I had in Japan was kind of a weird job in that it was short term – it was like three month contract, three month contract so they outsource teachers to universities.

Maria: Okay. So you’d spend three months at one university and then move on to another.

Gabriel: Yeah, and then do something else for a month or two and go back in the – so, in spring term, I’d spend the spring term there, I’d work for a company, and they

would outsource instructors to the universities, and I did that, gosh on and off for three four years even. No, three years.

Maria: Right, Long time in Japan.

Gabriel: Yeah, long time in Japan, but in three month pieces. And six month pieces. And so I would, I was on this kind of cycle – I'd come back to Korea to work a summer camp, I had lots of friends here, and kind of make it a longer trip – summer camp, winter camp in Korea, Japan for three months in the spring, and fall - I was living here and there and go home to the States, summer or winter or you know late fall, or whatever it was and um that was my life for about three years. I was on this kind of cycle – Korea, Japan, Korea, Japan, travel, travel, travel, and that was pretty cool. And - do you want to hear more about the job in Japan?

Maria: I'll definitely ask about it later. Did you then decide to come back to Korea?

Gabriel: Yeah, then, 2007 rolled around and I was still happy with that roller coaster circular sort of thing -- personal things in my life drew me back to Korea – girls. So then I applied for a job in Seoul, at a foreign language institute attached to a university, so kind of *hagwon* but on a university campus, and I got the job and I took it. I left things with Japan like, “yeah maybe I'll come back in February March sort of thing.” I left in December, but they were pretty flexible, they hired hundreds of people so it wasn't like I was leaving them...

Maria: Leaving them in the lurch.

Gabriel: Yeah. And so then I decided to stay in Seoul, um part of the reason was that I lived in (*a small city*) in Korea, and Tokyo, and I had just loved Tokyo and, as I said, I'm from a very small town, so it was always in the back of my mind like, “What's it like to live in Korea in a big city?” – it's not really a fair comparison – (*the small Korean city I had lived in*) to Tokyo, the whole time, and Korea has a special place in my heart, like it's the first place I really lived you know, so I really like Japan, I think it's extremely pleasant, but Korea kind of has a special feeling for me - kind of *jeong* kind of thing. It's like no, I just feel more comfortable in Korea than I do in Japan, although, in Japan, I don't know, I feel like more of a guest or something, in Korea - you're gonna ask me about Korean ability at some point here. Like I'm not great, but I can get by, certainly I can do what I need to do, and I can understand a lot and whereas my Japanese was very limited and I never quite was in a position to learn a lot cos I was always leaving - I'm coming and going and so my Japanese ability would get to the highest point it'd ever been – and then I would leave – and I would come back and build it up exactly matching where I was and then leave. So yes, so Seoul was sort of a comfortable place for me, Korea is comfortable. 2007 I worked at the same place and I liked it, it was good, it was sort of a weird environment -- for whatever reason the culture of that particular place was sort of competitive and (pause) I came more at a time there when people were sick of that competitive environment, sick of the sort of toxic atmosphere, and some people worked really hard to try and change things ,and they sort of took the new folks under their wings and did stuff, and I was pretty enthusiastic and - I don't know, I just I felt like I really cared about the job - put a lot into it, so I was sort of a new part of this new blood into the place and we all tried to share ideas and we all – it was pretty exciting to be there at that time, and I wasn't really shy with my opinions about things. And the director was (pause) an interesting person who had some difficulties dealing with foreign staff - she's Korean, and pressured on all sides about - she's running a program, she's teaching she's administering probably 25 teachers, 20 teachers, and so, right from the beginning, I just wasn't shy offering my ideas,

opinions, suggestions, whatever, and she's like, "oh this guy's got some nerve," I guess. Then I started to get really serious about teaching around that time, I guess, and then I started my Masters distance online - 2008 fall of 2008 - and I guess it was at that same time, I became assistant director at the language school. And the majority of the work was working with the new teachers there, trying to make things easier for them, and also acting as the go-between between the director and the rest of the teachers. And that was sort of a bit too much to handle with doing graduate work and dealing with massaging 20 egos, everything else. So then -I'm telling you my whole story here!

Maria: No, it's great!

Gabriel: I'm ready! (laughs) So then, Monday I got an email from someone at the graduate school and they said they're looking for teacher trainers in (*a southern city in Korea*) and just for three weeks or something and I thought that's great, I've got a long vacation, I might as well check it out, so I applied, and they were kind of like, "oh, you're in Korea, that's cool -we didn't expect that." And I had some sort of bizarre interview that wasn't really an interview cos the guy I was speaking with wasn't working there, he just was giving his stamp of approval, but yeah this guy I mean - sounds like an okay guy like it's not an interview but he called me up, and he's like, "So, you know, what's going on? What's going on, what are you doing? Tell me about your grad school." So - come to find out - he's a good friend of mine now, and we kind of laugh, I'm like, "you're the worst interviewer ever" (laughs) and he's like, "it wasn't an interview, it's just a chat" and so then I came down for three weeks in (*the southern city*), spring January in the winter break of 2009 and the naïve enthusiasm of doing something for the first time was just so exciting - to be teacher training - and then I just loved it, I thought it was just really amazing - I was so, I was kind of intimidated by the people I was working with, everyone had already finished their Masters, everyone seemed so good on paper, and then it was like, "oh, I'm not gonna be impressed until I see people do something, and then I'll be impressed." So then, my goal is to be unemployed and study, doing work here and there, but it never quite worked out because this place in (*this southern city*) kind of begged me to stay and flattered me and I ended up staying for six months, in 2009. Even though I lived in Seoul, I got an apartment here through them and I worked here as I was studying. It was hard cos we were reinventing the wheel because we didn't know what we were doing and we had no real guidance or anything, but it was still - it was enjoyable work and I loved it, it was just what I wanted to do. So I did that for - gosh, yes, for three, four months - 2009 spring 2009 summer I was back here 2009 fall I was back here - I never committed to stay here long but it was like, "yeah okay I'll do the spring, yeah okay," and then I was like, "yeah, I'm done with (*this southern city*), teacher training is going to be elsewhere if I want to do it." I guess we're at 2010. I signed - I didn't sign, I agreed, verbally, for a contract in Seoul at a university and it sort of just- they showed what I thought was unprofessionalism really quickly like, "hurry up, hurry up and give me this document," - "well, you know, it hasn't changed since yesterday, when I didn't have it, it's the kind of thing that takes a couple of weeks." So it was like January February 2010, I would do more training in (*the southern city*) and this thing just sort of wasn't looking like it was what I wanted to do with this job, and I just, I thought, you know what, this is not- sorry guys, I'm not doing it, I like to make decisions objectively and logically but also at the same time I like to reflect the emotional side of the decisions and this one was just not feeling right. I'm like, I'm done with it, and

then I came back (*to the southern city*) for six months last year and at that point I trained up to be a teacher/trainer.

Maria: Yeah. Was your Masters through (*name of school*)?

Gabriel: My Masters was through (*name of school*). There's a lot of overlap between professors and objectives. So I trained up to be a teacher trainer while working here in (*this southern city*). My Masters was finished by then -- and then again, the theme that I'm seeing now, I hadn't seen before, is my desire to be job-free (laughs) -- and so what I expected, that I would be just going around the world doing training here and there -- I'm still pretty set in Seoul but I thought, you know, Seoul can be a nice home base and I can go to Algeria for two months and do training and come back -- I don't know if I really thought this was going to happen, being a trainer, but certainly people do that. But there's not that much work there for, especially, inexperienced trainers- you don't get the jobs right off, you know. So I finished training, I decided that I was pretty much done with (*the southern city*), that that time commuting, going back and forth, it's not what I -- and then ... oh okay, so I found a job training in Seoul and they seemed to like me a lot. It's kind of a private company doing their own courses. I guess I'd applied to them before and didn't make the cut, and now I finished my Masters and they were a lot more keen at that point and I talked them into a three month job and I was like, "I don't want to commit to longer than three months because I want to go travelling in January in America, in Costa Rica, or wherever," and they bought into it. And so anyway, around the same time, I got a phone call from my former director who -- there were some personal difficulties there at times, but we ended up on a good note -- and she said, "my friend is looking for-- you've finished your Masters, right? My friend is looking for somebody, do you want to have an interview?" -- "Yeah, I'll go, sure, whatever," and then, come to find out, I'd actually met her friend before and she's a really nice lady, we have a good relationship, and she was, "do you want to work here? This interview's over if you want." It was like a five minute interview, and I thought it sounds cool, so that's what... I'm in Seoul now, I'm in the second year of my two year contract at a university there, I work in a graduate school (*at the university*).

Maria: Teaching or teacher training?

Gabriel: No teacher training. Teaching is an interesting word -- half of what I do is, I run interpretation workshops, so they come in with Korean speeches like from the President or something, and half of them go to the back of the room and simultaneously interpret the speech, so one, usually a girl (there's one guy), usually they read their Korean speech and half the room interprets and the other half listens and compares what they heard to whatever and then they sort of do some feedback on that, and then I give feedback on the English that I heard. I don't listen to the Korean -- I give feedback on the English that I heard and sort of try my best to answer questions that came up in their interpreting and/or their feedback. So teaching is a word ... I don't know if it's teaching, that's sort of a question I'm still thinking about -- I think it's pretty cool, I think it's really productive, but I don't have a lesson, I don't plan anything, I don't --I give feedback, and notes on what I heard, and suggestions for whatever. So I call that a running interpretation workshop or coach. So my goal is to be the best non-Korean-speaking interpreting coach in Seoul. I think I'm on the right track

Maria: Do you think you will stay in this job? When your contract's up?

Gabriel: I'm not sure at all, I'm thinking about it a lot. That work - I find it interesting but it's not my passion, my passion is more in teacher training, but -- sort

of one of those things, it's not perfect but not – you know, I work twelve hours a week, so it gives me time to do things like the magazine (I edit), teacher training on the side. I did a course this summer through (*a US teacher training school*) -- online curriculum development course, teaching I mean, and so I don't think... I feel like if I had a different job, it might not provide those kinds of opportunities, so, you know, if I do six hours of interpreting workshops a week, even if it's not exactly what I love, I think it's amazing. And the rest of my job seems to be, so far, teaching Conversation classes for graduate students.

Maria: So would you say – or, well, I'll leave it up to you – which country or workplace was the most memorable? And why?

Gabriel: I wondered about that 'memorable' –I guess the most memorable was probably that first time in that teacher training zone because everything was so new and things that I thought would happen, things that I thought had been helpful before, weren't really so helpful any longer – it's totally different teaching a room full of students who aren't thinking about every action that you take, and giving intentionality to everything that you do, so it's sort of like “wow, I need to really” – like, just teaching students, okay, I'll do a thing and of course I care about the results but I'm not, I don't think about all the possible interpretations of that, this action, so that -- I think it was memorable in that it was eye-opening – “wow, look at all these choices that I'm making here that are available for scrutiny if someone chooses, and I'm welcoming these choices from the participants.” So that, I'd say that was probably the most memorable thing. I was working with a guy who was also very new to teacher training and so we were just, as I said, reinventing the wheel and discovering things on our own and trying to have fun doing it and it was memorable because it was interesting, I suppose, and the lessons from that I think still stay with me quite a lot.

Maria: Okay, all right, so, how long have you been teaching EFL? In numbers.

Gabriel: Ten years.

Maria: Ten years.

Gabriel: Little over I guess.

Maria: All right. And, I'll ask you this again, why did you become a teacher?

Gabriel: (pause) I wanted to travel but I wanted to, I needed to make money. I wasn't so concerned about the teaching aspect of it you know -- if there were other not so labour intensive jobs that offered such opportunities then I would've considered them as well.

Maria: What – since you've been doing teacher training as well, this is, this will work – teaching tools or tricks do you consider to be indispensable?

Gabriel: I'm just going to answer one, if it's okay. The only thing that I thought was indispensable, when I was thinking about this question, is thinking time and preparing time and then sharing. Lot of times teachers, you know, go into classes and ask a question to the room and it can be terrifying and can bring the sound of crickets, but I think if there's a bit of thinking time individually, and then preparing, and then opening it up to the floor, I think it does a lot to prevent those crickets. So I think that's ... my number one tool is don't expect quick answers cold from the group,

Maria: Yeah, so, kind of, don't be afraid of silence.

Gabriel: Don't be afraid of it, but also, do your best to not -- I just hate to stand at the front of the room when I've asked the question -- I am afraid of the silence I guess -- so try and prevent that by never asking a question to the whole room if they haven't had a chance to think about it beforehand.

Maria: And what teaching principles underpin your teaching?

Gabriel: I guess probably many people say they're eclectic, and I guess I would have to say the same. I think it's - right now at this very moment - I think it's all about choices, and we have to own the choices that we make. So, I think it's so easy to say, "oh I teach communicatively, I teach whatever," but I think that we learn by our experiences, our beliefs, our contexts, we have to make our own choices, so I think my main belief is that we have to own the choices that we make.

Maria: And how would you describe your teaching self?

Gabriel: My teaching self.

Maria: You're not limited to teacher, professor - anything, any term.

Gabriel: I suppose, again, my answer depends so much on the context. So, in my regular sort of discussion class, maybe facilitator is a word that works right now. In my interpreting thing, a word that I think works is coach. I haven't done much regular teaching training for the last year or so but what I've been doing recently is trainer training, so I'm helping Korean public school teachers become better at helping other Korean public school teachers so (laughs) the role there (laughs) I don't know - guide? Yeah, can I ... do you want more on that or is that...?

Maria: Your choice

Gabriel: How would you describe your teaching self? I kind of stumbled on that when I saw it earlier. (pause) So, yeah, I guess again my answer depends on where I am, what I'm doing. Like right now I'm working with these public school teachers who have been chosen to be excellent teachers and I really - hands off, and really try to be kind of - I wouldn't say trying to be cryptic, but I end up being cryptic - just ask a bunch of questions and set up this whole organisation where they are teaching each other and giving feedback to each other and I'm in the back making notes and you know, asking real questions that I don't know the answer to - like I'm not trying to - I'm not trying to ask questions that I know the answer to that will make them think-what I'm saying - hey guys I really don't know what happens here, what do you think, how did you feel about this, how did you feel about that? Usually people say this so when I go over here it's like just a question you know, and I find it's kind of difficult at times because a lot of times they're looking for a secret code - "what did you mean, what did you mean when you wondered about that?" - "No, that was - there was no intention there, I was simply wondering there." And so, I find it can be difficult to navigate these roles: I'm a speaker in front of a room, so there might be the idea that, oh okay this is an English class and I stamp my feet you know. "No, no, this is not an English class, speak Korean, but speak English to me but I'm - honestly guys we're beyond - this is not an English class, it's conducted in English because someone hired me to do it, and I can only do it in English, but it's not an English class." - "Okay, we believe you, we can understand that, it's not a teacher training class?" So I think it depends on the roles. It's really hard so if it's just a training course, still you have to think about 'what am I doing there? looks like teaching English here,' because I think that's the expectation - lots of people, lots of teachers who join training courses, they join to improve their English. And they probably do improve their English, but it's not the focus, and if they don't improve their English,

it's not a loss, it's not a failure. And I happen to believe that in order to improve their English, there should be some input on English, I think feedback is helpful - there's no feedback like that in - any time working with teachers in the last year and a half, I've given exactly one minute of English feedback.

Maria: Yeah. How have your ideas of teaching changed?

Gabriel: So much. I guess when I first started teaching, I read some books and heard some stuff about this thing called communicative language teaching - it seemed to be what I was hired to do and the idea that, you know, Korean students, Japanese students, Asian students have no chance to communicate in school, and they just get grammar and vocab crammed in their heads so now it's your job to make up for eighteen years of deficient education -- I guess it makes a certain amount of sense but I don't - I can't imagine now, ten years later, that I would have that same 'you've got to make up for this deficient education kind of idea.' So I think the biggest change is that now I'm - I think and hope and believe that - I'm really focused on the context and what are we, why are we here, rather than just flying the banner of CLT without thinking it through. So you know right now I'm working as an interpreting coach, there's some things that I can take from what's commonly known as CLT but I can't - it's not that kind of thing.

Maria: What do you remember of your own schooldays? Who was or were the teachers that influenced you the most and when you were in school, and why?

Gabriel: Sad to say there's not too many teachers that influenced me too positively.

Maria: That's okay, negative influences are also good.

Gabriel : I sort of mentioned before that, you know, I was a poor student in high school - I just didn't care about school, I just didn't see the point. Some of my fixed memories are going to class -- whatever, Advanced Biology and all the -- all my classmates were copying homework from each other cos they didn't do it and I was like ... not even participate in this class, I didn't do my homework, so what? And that was basically my attitude, "you know what, I'm not even going to do my homework, I don't even care that much," and I think teachers kind of liked me cos I was polite enough but I was like, "I'm not sorry, I just didn't do it." I just didn't care about school. I would read a lot and do my own thing and play sports and whatever but school was just sort of this like mindless thing that I did all day from seven thirty to two and then life happened all around it. Memorable teachers? At the risk of being too negative, I have one teacher - Math teacher, I always thought Math was kind of interesting - I'm like most people I guess - and he just totally ruined it (laughs) just - he sucked the joy out of it I was like, "you know what I hate Math now" - I liked Math from whatever, grade 1 to 10, algebra, he just - at the board he's just writing equations on the board and I guess now I would say there was no scaffolding - there was never - you just get the right answer or you don't but there's no... I just couldn't see, I couldn't understand what was going on at the board and it was - the idea it seemed to be looking back now, if you didn't get it, it's your fault - and he's just at the board and 45 minutes of some guy with a toupee writing on the board is not really ...

Maria: Where do you stand when you're in the classroom?

Gabriel: I sit a lot (laughs). I don't write much on the board. I sit - depends on the context I guess, but I like a circle, I like to be in a horseshoe. I don't mind being in the centre either, but all around I guess. I don't - I try not to spend too much time at the board, at the front.

Maria: All right. What to you is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country?

Gabriel: I guess it comes down to expectations – expectations of your role like (pause) I said before, I was a teacher trainer it's like, "okay, you're a foreigner, you must be teaching us English here," it's like, "no I actually, this is a training course," or you know, "you're our teacher, you must care about our wellbeing and you know whatever" – not to say that I don't but I think there's just a different expectation of the roles - like ... talking to a Korean friend of mine, she's a teacher and she says, "if my students miss class, I call their parents," or something like that and, I know I'm not a public school teacher but I would still have a hard time doing that, I just don't see that as my job or my role. So I think there's a lot of different expectations culturally you know. If someone invites me to dinner that day, and I happen to not feel like going, I have no problem saying no. I think in Korea, it's probably rude, I'm at peace with that, with myself, no, I'm really sorry, I - even if I'm not busy, I'll probably not go just cos I don't like that kind of thing - I don't want to participate really in that. So under the overarching umbrella of roles and expectations - and I guess they can be clear or unclear, but it's still - can be jarring when it comes "oh you're my teacher and you need to do this, teachers are supposed to do this," – "oh, I didn't even know that," you know, "you work here, workers are supposed to do this." Like, I worked at some - didn't mention it, I worked at some company training their employees - English lessons, and just - we have a very tight schedule like I don't even know 9, 9 to 6 or 7, and there were two hour breaks in there, and my concept was yes, it's a break, I'm going to give it my all during the lesson, but during the break, I might go to the gym, I might take a nap, I might do any number of things -- but the unstated expectation was you should be in the office when you're not teaching, and to me that was like, "oh I didn't even think of it, what do you mean?" Oh, well, I don't know how I feel about that, but I'm going to keep probably going to the gym and napping. So yeah, my answer there is clear - clearly stated and unclearly stated expectations can be the biggest problem, for me anyway.

Maria: How in your opinion has living and working in another country changed you?

Gabriel: I think it's given me a much broader perspective on things like (pause) - seeing different sides to it like my example there about staying in the office. Ten years ago I might have been much more adamant- or just 'that's ridiculous how dare they,' now it's just like, 'oh, okay, that's how it works, well I'm gonna choose that I'm still not going to participate in it.' The net effect is that I might make the same choices or whatever, but now I'm really a bit more open to different perspectives, and I don't know if that's a great example but my point is sort of that just knowing that there are just various ways to look at something that might seem so cut and dried, black and white I think is really, quite, amazing thing about living in another country. Take a - better friends and stuff again, from a really small town – sometimes when I go home it's like, it's really, the reverse culture shock is more powerful than the culture shock, like, "really, you really think that, you don't, you can't see, oh wow, okay, cos, everybody I know (laughs) in Korea thinks like *that* now, okay well." So I guess realization that there are different perspectives and thus broadening my own ...

Maria: You said you did speak Korean - did you take formal classes? Or...

Gabriel: When I first came I took them for a month - five months of formal classes.

Maria: And what would you say your level of Korean is now?

Gabriel: Pre-intermediate.

Maria: That's pretty good. And Japanese?

Gabriel: Beginner. I mean, true beginner.

Maria: Spanish?

Gabriel: Ten years – I know you speak Spanish so I'm not going to exaggerate. (laughs) I don't know. I took lectures in Spanish and I communicate with my friends but I can't – better than my Korean, well, it's different right, Korean I, oh, I can make full grown up sentences in Spanish, in Korean I really can't. I can understand a lot in both, so Spanish is still pre-intermediate but a tick better than the Korean.

Maria: Just a couple more questions. How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live? And why?

Gabriel: I guess it's important – it can be important in order to make their lives better, and happier and smoother and easier and not rely on other people like coworkers and stuff – it can get kind of annoying like, "can you buy my bus tickets?" and whatever, so that's one part. I think the other part is that, you know, like transfer errors and stuff, it can be helpful to know where they're coming from, and where these errors might be coming from. I don't actually think it's super important to know the specific language of your students. I think what's much more important is to have had language learning experiences. I think what's even more important than that is to have reflected on those language learning experiences. So I think it's too easy to say that everyone should learn the language where they are - at the risk of making excuses about my Japanese, like I was there for this certain amount of time, I never got motivated - would it have been helpful for me to learn more? Would I have been a better teacher? Better? I don't know. I don't really know how much it would impact my teaching to be - if I was suddenly fluent in Japanese, how much better of a teacher would I be now in Korea, I don't know. If I was suddenly fluent in Japanese, how much better a teacher would I be in Japan? Surely there would be - I would have a higher awareness of certain things. I've seen plenty of - I've seen some foreign teachers in Korea who are excellent at Korean and my view is that it might be a detriment cos they're showing off, they're assuming errors where there're not - their whole thing is about you know, L1 interference, so I don't think it's super - especially important to learn the language of the country where you're in, and it's impossible -- if you followed my dream of five countries in five years, from way back before suddenly I'm in Qatar so I'm going to learn Arabic --like, I feel like the experiences of being in a place without a voice, without knowing the language, I think, is very useful, learning experiences of learning languages is very useful -- your particular place, I think it becomes impossible in a sense. This spring, I had some Russian students and I did a very like 20 minutes of 'okay, what are the common things, common problems that Russian students might have,' and I thought that that was useful. I don't think - I wasn't really going to study Russian, for dealing with two out of 50 students, but I think that in and of itself was slightly useful so.

Maria: And last question.

Gabriel: Took a lot of words.

Maria: How would you describe your ethnic background?

Gabriel: White American, Irish-Italian-German.

Maria: Okay, Thank you very much.

Gabriel: My pleasure.

Appendix E4: James' answers to the questionnaire

Age	45-50
Gender	Male
Nationality	American
Ethnic background (self-description)	mostly caucasian north american (wasp)
Current country/workplace	Korea
Length of time in that country	2.5+ years
Plans to stay in that country for	not sure 6 months or more
Current ELT workplace	Other (please specify) I don't teach English. I teach English teachers how to teach English better.
Length of time at current workplace	3-4 years
Like best about current workplace	Other (please specify) sense of contribution to a larger goal of improving cross-cultural communication
Undergrad degree in	english literature
Formal teaching qualifications	a Master of Education degree doctoral candidate in (<i>Education</i>)
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at university. most of my language study has been as a second language: Tajik, Russian, Japanese, Korean, Bulgarian. Only studied german as a true foriegn language. When i studied Spanish in college, you could call that second langauge as well--in part at least
How studied	A mix of the above
Teaching	Yes
Previous teaching workplaces	that would be really long: Japan 7 years. ESL in US 1 year Bulgaria 6 months Tajikistan 1 year. Some in Korea for the last two years A few shorter periods in other countries
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	0
First language	American English
Languages spoken	3
Proficiency in languages spoken	ACTFL OPI scale: English: superior Japanese: Advanced low Korean, German, Spanish: Novice Mid Bulgarian, Russian: Novice Low
When started language learning	19

Native language of country where they work	No, not well enough for day-to-day interactions
Student of native language	Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past. busy now, more time before
A good teacher is	trying to be better.
A good student is	doing his/her best to learn.
Easiest way to learn another language is	input. FL is nearly impossible. SL much better.
Best thing about working overseas	I feel competent at the the tasks I am required to perform, and the tasks I am performing are in demand in the country.
Best thing about living overseas	relative to my previous life? -- little. Relative to meeting the needs of my family? -- immeasurable (see other above).
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	patience with cultural differences and with lack of awareness of cultural differences.
Miss most about home country	yo quiero taco bell.
How has living and working in another country changed you?	not changed. it represents the character of who I am. I have lived more places than you have fingers and toes. wish I could -- not enough time.

Appendix E4: Transcript of the interview with James

Note: Workplace and city names have been removed or changed to a description, in order to help maintain James's privacy.

Maria: James, do I have your permission to record this interview?

James: Sure.

Maria: Okay, this is an interview with James on the 17th of August 2011. First up James, could you tell me a little bit about your background, please?

James: Yeah, sure, which part of my background do you need information about?

Maria: Start with birth.

James: Well, I grew up in the United States, in Arizona and, because of my father's job, we moved around a lot so I lived in Arizona, California and then kind of settled for junior high and high school in Texas before going to university in Arizona and then up to Washington state, and then to Japan and then back to Indiana, and then from Indiana I went to Bulgaria, and then from Bulgaria I went to Illinois, and then from Illinois I went to Tajikistan, and then from Tajikistan, I came back – no, that's probably out of order, then back to Illinois and then Vermont and then after Vermont, we came to Korea. There's probably some other stuff in there, like Japan and Kazakhstan or something – no, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. So basically I moved around a lot in terms of location but a fairly nuclear family, my parents were only children, so you know, I don't have a lot of cousins or anything like that, and that's sort – I don't know if it facilitated the ability to move around but, you know, there was not so much pressure to stay in one place. And probably you know I started out to be in in the hard sciences – I was a dual major in Astronomy and Physics but then somewhere along the way when I was getting like Cs, I was like, okay, maybe this is not for me? And then switched to my second interest, which was English literature and that of course - of course! – as often is the case, leads to teaching and I got a Teaching Certificate when I was in Washington State, but unfortunately, because of the demographics at the time that there weren't a lot of jobs – kind of difficult to explain but with the American baby boom, we hired a whole bunch of teachers, and those teachers were still working but the baby boom was off, you know, they'd all graduated and it was about the time when the baby boomers boomlet – the children of the baby boom were entering elementary school, but I wasn't interested in elementary education, so that was the thing that got me on to teaching English in other countries.

Maria: Okay. Your teaching certificate – was it to teach – what levels was it to teach?

James: I believe it was Grade 6 to 12?

Maria: Okay. So secondary school, what we call in Australia. You mentioned in the form that you filled out – in the survey – that you'd actually taught English in a lot of different countries. Was that when you were travelling with your family or...?

James: No no no no. My travelling with my family was in the US and then after I graduated - just did just a lot of bouncing around. So, as I said, once I finished my education with a BA in English and a post baccalaureate degree in teaching English and then the teaching certificate, there were just no jobs in (*the city he lived in*) – you know, people with ten, twenty years' experience were being forced out of a job – I guess that's being made redundant? So, plenty of jobs in Japan at the time and that's why I went there and that just started me on this path of teaching English as a foreign language and - ended up in a few places like Bulgaria and Tajikistan, and for a while

I was back in the United States teaching ESL, when I was in Indiana as a graduate student but yeah, out of what we'd call public education in the US, the government sponsored education.

Maria: So how did you find out about the jobs in Japan?

James: A bit of a lark - weirdly as an undergraduate, we'd made friends with some Japanese exchange students and that sort of planted a seed and then when I went to the placement office in (*my*) University, as I was applying to those 40 odd jobs that I got one interview out of, you know, the position in Japan sort of opened up and it was - unlike the cases with a lot of people where you'd go over or you'd do all of your interviewing - online wasn't the thing that people did then, but over the phone and mailing back and forth - the guy came and did interviews so that was probably the big thing that made me decide to go. There was- a piece of my Liberal Arts education that I felt that really started me on Japan was the fact that our curriculum in the United States doesn't really allow much non-European literature discussion, so you know I can tell you everything about Pilgrim's Progress but knew nothing about Yukio Mishima or something like that so I thought that would be a rounding out of my understanding of the world.

Maria: Yeah, okay. So, which countries have you worked in? Japan, Bulgaria, Tajikistan, Korea?

James: Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan and the United States, let's see - that's all. Yup.

Maria: Could you describe the places or the environments you've worked in? Has it all been adult, teaching university level students? Or ...

James: You know - talked about it - when I was in Japan, I would tell people that I taught a range from kindergarten to septuagenarians. One of my students had been in the army when Hiroshima was bombed so his unit was sent in there just days after so yeah, pretty wide historic range and then, in the other countries, there were sort of different things like for example the job in Bulgaria was through USAID and it was training people for study in the United States so it was basically a bunch of Eastern European, actually, southern Eastern European, - Balkan states - people who had been accepted for programs but their English scores were not sufficiently satisfactory for USAID so we were doing a little additional training there. Tajikistan was a combination of things through the Soros Fund, but generally teacher training and retraining - you're probably familiar with the problem - with the fall of the Soviet Union, all of the teachers had been trained in Russian and Russian was no longer seen as the language of business so we sort of had a combination of young teachers who knew that English was an opportunity for them and then you had a retraining of English teachers in less - from grammar translation methodology to more communicative methodology, as well as training teachers who had been teaching Russian who were wishing to switch over to teach English because there was less demand for Russian, so there was a kind of mix of things, and again a range of students, but I guess the jump from teaching English to teaching TESOL occurred when I went to Tajikistan.

Maria: Yeah, okay, Which country or which workplace was the most memorable, and why?

James: I don't know that any of them were more memorable than any of the others, I think my experience in Tajikistan was probably more life-changing in the sense that - you know, Tajikistan was not only the smallest and poorest of the former Soviet republics but you know it was literally - it was you know way down in - it's a third

world country, if you look at it economically, so we're talking about average monthly income of 7 dollars you know, and people get by right. But you know (laughs) I would repair the furniture (laughs) and, even at that, we were repairing the furniture with just garbage (laughs) that you found on the street essentially, you know, firewood, kind of stuff (laughs) and this was at (*an important national university*) - that's how far things had come. And, in addition, I don't know if you're aware, but Tajikistan had gone through a civil war after the fall of the Soviet Union and so I was one of the first people to come in after that and so just things like Lenin's statue with bullet holes in it and people literally having those wartime experiences were far from my experience as a north American, particularly an American - since I was a kid, basically, after Vietnam, we went to an all-volunteer force and the only people who knew war were people who signed up for it for whatever reason and we didn't really send people out that often, so, being in a country that had not only been through that trauma but been through essentially a third world experience and watched their quality of life diminish after the fall of the Soviet Union because the Russian central government wasn't topping money in to the republics anymore and you know if you don't know the history of the 'stans it was a sort of gerrymandering situation, to fight the - to set the ethnic groups against each other so that too - the way the Soviets set it up was - when the Soviet union fell - meant that there were going to be civil wars and conflicts in all of that central Asian region.

Maria: So it was the life over there that was more memorable than the teaching?

James: Well, yeah, for me not - maybe that means I'm not sort of like committed to my job but committed to my life.

Maria: (laughs) works for me. Okay. All right. Now, you've taught in lots of different countries. Hmm, how long in numbers, would you say you've been teaching EFL?

James: (pause) Well that's a little tricky cos I went - I guess it was '91 when I went to Japan. Is that right? '90, '91. Anyway, somewhere along then '90, '91, went to Japan and so that would make it kind of a total of 20 plus years, but not all of that time has been teaching EFL. In some ways I - even when I get asked here to teach English classes in the English program, the classes they ask me to teach are Applied Linguistics or, let's see, what's the one they keep asking me to teach? Teaching English to young children, so in some ways, probably for the last five to ten years of that twenty years has not been teaching English anymore, it's been teaching TESOL, but a good fifteen years.

Maria: Fifteen years. All right. So, going back to teaching EFL, what teaching tools or teaching tricks do you consider to be indispensable?

James: Well, if I had to say anything, I would say listening and and that - it's not the student's listening, it's you as a teacher listening to what your environment says. I think we're taught to some kind of systems in our teacher training programs and those systems have to be flexible to deal with the situation on the ground. You know I'm thinking of my Tajik students who (pause) - the reason they were studying English was to get out of a desperate situation. I think of my Japanese and Korean students who at some level are completely and utterly resistant to English learning at some level - the ones that are in those sort of mandatory situations, and then additionally you've got a group of students who are doing it as sort of a hobby: "I like English, I like foreign languages, it's a window outside of my own world." - Like the seventy-two year old guy who'd you know been in World War 2 - so

understanding, and listening to students, and I guess maybe if we were to put a name on it, I think it's needs analysis - teachers doing a needs analysis of their students that ask the right questions - probably hope to reach them a lot more I think. A big example is that most of our curricula tend to be grammar-focused and yet, in a Korean university, most of the students have studied that grammar more fully than the average -- the average person teaching at a Korean university, even if they do have training, didn't learn English through a grammar based way -- they learned English for communicative purposes, for the most part, if we're talking about a native speaker, so their learning experience and their students' learning experiences are pretty much completely different so, in doing a needs analysis that understands the learning experience and the learning needs, to go forward, I think we'd probably find out that the vast majority of what gets taught in Korean universities doesn't match what the students need.

Maria: Okay. So what teaching principles would you say underpin your teaching, and what has changed?

James: Probably - you know in some ways coming from an American environment where we were trying to, we were already trained to be learning centred, learner centred, through the education system that we had - ask the question again.

Maria: How what teaching principles underpin your teaching? And what has changed?

James: So I think there's some pieces that are quite distinct. So if you look at a - you know it needs to be learner centred and we need to understand the students but at the same time, I worked a lot when I - as a beginning student just learning how to do games - and that is essentially what we're talking about, is dealing with the developmental stages of students. That is to say that, you know, an elementary kid or a kindergarten kid really needs to have things that focus on the short attention span that they have, that focuses on their developmental abilities, like physical objects to manipulate, physical objects to relate to the language they're using, and then, when we get to older students, they probably have some systems that are already built in, that is the linguistic systems and then at that point then grammar translation techniques, like translating, they have some better benefits to creating the neural pathways for using the foreign language. And what I think is that having a variety of tools and an eclectic approach will allow us to work with those better. And I don't necessarily know that our classrooms allow us to do that, so if I were to try and answer in one sentence what the basic principles were, I would say the basic principles are having a lot of tools, having a big bag of tricks, whatever teaching babble phrase you want to put on each of those tools - having them know how they work, know when they work and with what sort of students, so sort of a triangulation: the tools, the students and the goals.

Maria: How would you describe your teaching self?

James: Cranky? No, I think that's just today. In some ways I feel like I -- lately - have been getting more strict. If I looked at the trajectory - and it's actually some research that suggests that as teachers get more experienced, they have a better sense of what sort of language they want the students to accomplish and so they become somewhat more strict and somewhat more picky about entrance and assessment and stuff. (pause) But, at the same time, if I have students coming to class, I'm not gonna do anything to keep them from coming to class. I'm very committed to the fact that it's easy for us to discourage students and, while I don't think it's an affective filter,

that's the general metaphor that people have put on it, on the students that become discouraged and demotivated.

Maria: What sort of - if you had to use a label, like teacher or professor, or something, what would you choose to use to describe yourself as a teacher?

James: I work really hard to be a facilitator - to find ways of finding out - helping them find out what they need and then helping find ways that will work for them to get to where they need and that's a facilitator.

Maria: Cool. And how have your ideas about teaching changed over time or from country to country?

James: Hmm. (pause) You know, fundamentally, I don't know that that they've ever changed that much. One of the horrible things that I like to bring up is a line from Dead Poets' Society and the Robin Williams character says, "What's the purpose of language?" and the students can't come up with an answer, and he said, "It's to woo women." And the point is that we use language to be a human being and I'm firmly convinced that our curricula doesn't focus on that (laughs) very much and that I don't know why is it

James: (*A mutual acquaintance*) recently wrote, "What kind of paradigm shift would you like to-?" - she asked on her Facebook page, and what I realized is that our language teaching as English as a foreign language, or for that matter, virtually any foreign language - based on my experience learning two or three foreign languages - hasn't changed, it's still what the linguists told us a long long time ago, that it's graphemes and phonemes and morphemes and we can get sentences. And I'm firmly convinced that that's not how people use or acquire language. You know, Krashen's Natural Approach never turned into an effective instructional method, it's a description of how we acquire a second language but fails as - we fail to find a way to develop an instructional method that approaches the Natural Approach. It just hasn't happened. And that's a while back, (laughs) you know, it's been a while since we've known that there's this problem with our curriculum. What was the question again, so I can make sure I answered it?

Maria: How have your ideas about teaching changed from time over time or from country to country?

James: I don't necessarily know that it's changed that much. In some ways, I've been more committed - and if I had to say what - you know I had an inkling of all of that as a young teacher, as a new teacher just out of college, but I also had all of this stuff that I was told that I needed to do to teach and, sure enough, I guess I moved away from traditional approaches towards - even though the Natural Approach is something that ought to be traditional by now it's not.

Maria: Okay. What do you remember of your own school days? Who was or who were the teachers who influenced you the most when you were in school, and why?

James: (pause) I don't know. It's sort of back to teachers who made time for students, it's back to that listening issue. And I remember in eighth grade, having a head teacher who would work with us through problems and as well as a Math teacher, might have been eighth and ninth grade, you know he'd just sit and work with us until we figured out that GD distributive property - and you know it was tough, people didn't see - there was a cognitive belief and, you know, what I know of now about brain development at an adolescent age, it kind of indicates some of the things that some of the kids were doing, kids that developed sooner or later couldn't make the cognitive leap - could or couldn't make the cognitive leap at that age, they

just weren't ready for it. And then also another English teacher in eighth grade, same way. And then, in high school, an English teacher who took the time to come in and work with our essays - you know he was drinking his coffee and he'd answer my question about grammar and punctuation or rhetoric or whatever I was asking at the time.

Maria: All right. Now the next set of questions – there's only a few to go – are about living in a different country. What to you is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country?

James: I don't know if this is going to be a good answer for you. I think, for the most part, English teachers in a lot of countries I've lived in are successfully able to live in English gatherings. And, in Seoul, you don't have to use Korean at all. In Tokyo, you try to speak Japanese and they say, "No no no, speak English, your Japanese sucks" or whatever (laughs) you know, and they're in a metropolitan place. You can live in a ghetto, you can go to your Costco, you can go to see American movies with subtitles in the language, you know, right now you can have a satellite and pump in Sky Life, Rupert Murdoch, anything you want from your country. So the world is changed from when I first went out, and admittedly I went to a fairly small town in Japan. So you know, it was the sort of situation like I'm not exactly the only foreigner in town cos we had probably a dozen or so teachers at this school but you were still so isolated that people would come up to you and say, "My friend saw you at the train station," and it's like, "Does your friend know me?" - it's like, "He said he saw this tall foreign person and it had to be you cos he was wearing that hat," or whatever, you know. And people are involved in your life and that situation - yeah I don't think happens for most foreign language teachers if they go to a large city. So I think the distinction between living in a large city and living in a rural area or in a developing country where you are more isolated –I'm sure most people talk about isolation being the difficult problem and, having jumped into that from the start, I guess I've been more adaptable to it and as I went along - you know there's no MacDonalds in the capital city of Tajikistan whereas here in (*the city where I live*) we've got a bunch – they have drive thru now in (*in this city*), kind of scary. So I guess the isolation in terms of developing as a teacher, the isolation is a huge problem. And that's changing too because the internet and the accessibility of that is allowing us to interact with people in a much greater way. Organisations for teachers in large countries where there's a sort of critical mass, sort of organisations like JALT or Kotesol, allow people to develop as teachers. - Although there's still plenty of people who are isolated from good education and are kind of making it up on their own - even in those big cities, somebody with little or no experience taking up a *hagwon* position and then trying to figure out how to teach – it's not a good situation for people, providing them education. And so I guess isolation in different ways – the social isolation that might make you feel homesick and go back to your country, or the professional developmental isolation that you might have in a variety of places is probably the biggest challenge.

Maria: Is that the biggest challenge for you?

James: Well I'm in a different place now so I have (pause) it certainly was at the start cos I went from a literature teacher to a language teacher with one course as an undergraduate on language instruction. So that was certainly a big problem for me. But, right now, I don't feel that in the same way because I have developed additional networks and, you know, the technology's helping out.

Maria: Okay. How in your opinion has living and working in another country changed you?

James: (pause) Well, I think I moved eleven times before I went into fifth grade, so the living and working in another country seemed like part of that process, you know. So the understanding and being able to adapt to different situations - one of the things, and I have no idea if this is just a compliment that people throw out at foreigners who try to speak their language - but I often get the compliment that, "Oh your pronunciation is great" or "Oh you sound just like a Korean." And I think language learning wise, this has something to do with how the critical period hypothesis actually works neurologically, that is to say that if we're isolated in one environment, if we're the kind of person who grows up in one town and in one sort of social cultural milieu, and linguistic milieu, that we sort of lose our ability to make these connections. But if you move around a lot, you can develop flexibility. I'm not convinced that we learn language any better or worse as we grow older, I think we just have less time to learn language as we become professionals and we have to deal with other things, so that's one piece of it. But, yeah, the living working in different countries points to cultural assimilation issues and I think that you know maybe I'm a little more flexible but at the same time I consciously make an effort to try and stay American - and not the best parts of America (laughs). Although I do often get asked if I'm Canadian - don't know if that's a compliment. But, you know, the idea that - I don't know if there's a good way to answer this, but there's a song by Everything but the Girl about one place and it talks about, "how would you like to be in one place, would you - wouldn't it be great if we could be in one place, wouldn't it be great if we weren't on all of these planes?" And I don't necessarily know that that's true, for me at least, I'm not uncomfortable with moving around, so maybe that's one of the things that has changed me. I think there are kinds of people that want to stay in the cave and there are kinds of people who want to go out on the Serengeti, and I guess maybe that changed me into the person who wanted to go out on the Serengeti - metaphorically speaking.

Maria: Okay. (laughs) you mentioned that you speak Korean...

James: Not so much but a little bit.

Maria: How well do you speak it?

James: Barely enough to get around. Yeah, haven't had much time to invest in learning Korean.

Maria: What about the other countries that you lived in? Did you choose to learn - or not learn - the languages?

James: Oh. Yeah, I would always learn to kind of a survival level. You know it's interesting - obviously my Japanese is probably the best of those - I often tell people that I'm fairly good at learning a second language but fairly crappy at learning a foreign language. I guess the answer to that is - and maybe this is an answer for students as well - we'll learn a language to the level that we need. And in Japan I may have been in a long term commitment there, I stayed for quite a while, I studied consistently when I was there, there were opportunities to do that and I made a strong effort to do so. And similarly in Bulgaria and Tajikistan I made good efforts. Tajikistan is a little bit of an interesting case because I think there - you may be aware - of all of the Soviet republics there was kind of a case of white flight - the ethnic Russian people, who were the ones that were educated in universities and government and stuff like that, and when the Soviet Union kind of broke apart, those

people went back to Russia because they could see the winds of change. So, in Tajikistan, there's this kind of weird mix of all of the government documents being in Russian and most people being able to speak a kind of a - it's not really a pidgin but a muddled up Russian - but Tajik coming to supplant the Russian language on the street. So, you know, I was trying to learn two languages - and that was somewhat less successful for me - at the same time. So I guess my answer for learning languages, it sort of depends on my commitment. And again, it's back to the ghetto situation - (*my university*) currently has over 100 native English teachers. And my wife speaks Korean, and she is Korean. So a lot of my motivation is not there to do that. And back to the other issue with the amount of time you have to invest - just a lot of it for a lot of work to do in the office in the English world ghetto bubble that we live in.

Maria: How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live, and why?

James: I think it's really important. And in spite of the fact that you're required to be the model of English and to use English with your students, I think being aware of the language and culture of your people you're teaching is really important - but again, that's my experience from being in mono-ethnic countries for the most part you know: Japan, Japanese ethnicity, and Korea, Korean, both ethnicity and nationality. You know there's really not a lot of countries like that - in the US - and we couldn't say that about Australia and we couldn't even say that about England any more. Even France and Germany have had a great influx of different nationalities. And then a lot of the other countries in the world that were created by the European colonising powers were never that way, you know, there were always tribal ethnicities - something central Asian where I was or - it's a case of, it's really about the community and the Tajiks is a group of people, but their tribal region is not all of Tajikistan and there's a large region, ethnic Uzbek region, in Tajikistan and etcetera etcetera. I mean, you probably know Pakistan: this Pashtun Afghan, Kashmiri Indo, so the actual name of Pakistan says that we've forced all of these ethnic cultures together and the same in Africa and, for the most part, in South America as well. So, you know, Asia is actually an exception in that the nationalities and the ethnicities are are - in some cases, more not - that it's same, virtually the same, so I don't necessarily know that it would be the same issue in a country like Germany. So, if you're teaching English in Germany, how - what - does that give you in insight into the culture that you couldn't get through English? Whereas there are just pieces of Korean and Japanese culture that you don't understand if you don't understand the language - it gives you a window into the learning needs of your students that you might not have otherwise. But again, would it be the same in France? Would you need to know French and learn, to teach English in French? And maybe that's back to the original comment about this gap - that I have a broad understanding of European culture and had virtually no understanding of the Asian culture when I came here.

Maria: Yeah, okay, and this is the last question. How would you describe your ethnic background?

James: Well, actually, my mum is adopted, so I'm not entirely sure, I never traced that down, but her adopted family well, all four of my grandparents have UK names (*lists a series of traditionally British surnames*). So, you know, all of these kind of British Isles origins, but as far as I know - and the deal is we assimilate into American culture and haven't seen a family tree that goes back three or four

generations outside of the USA – so, you know, there’s certainly influences from those Irish British Scots kind of history but that’s entirely coloured by generations in the United States.

Maria: Okay. Thank you very much.

James: You’re welcome.

Appendix E5: John's answers to the questionnaire

Age	40-44
Gender	Male
Nationality	American
Ethnic background (self-description)	Caucasian
Current country/workplace	Other (please specify) Just finished a contract in Korea will resume work in Japan in April
Length of time in that country	7 years in Japan 5 Years in Korea
Plans to stay in that country for	In Japan as long as possible.
Current ELT workplace	In a university
Length of time at current workplace	3-4 years
Like best about current workplace	Other (please specify) It's a tie between colleagues and students
Undergrad degree in	International Business
Formal teaching qualifications	MATESOL
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at secondary school. Yes, at university. Yes, I took private classes. I have studied at language schools in Germany and Japan
How studied	A mix of the above
Teaching	Yes
Previous teaching workplaces	USA 1 year and 2 months
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	3
First language	English
Languages spoken	3
Proficiency in languages spoken	English Native Spanish Beginner Japanese Low-intermediate German Low-intermediate
When started language learning	15
Native language of country where they work	Yes, sufficiently well for day-to-day interactions
Student of native language	Yes, I am. I study alone and ask Japanese people to help me from time to time.
A good teacher is	organized, enthusiastic, patient, and realistic.

A good student is	interested and consistent in his/her efforts
Easiest way to learn another language is	to use it as much as possible.
Best thing about working overseas	In Japan, it is Japan itself. The country is clean, and the people are polite. Both Korea and Japan pay well. In both countries, I have liked the students and enjoyed a great deal of freedom in the classroom.
Best thing about living overseas	Korea was challenging; it forced me to re-think almost everything. Japan is a magical place for me. People are so polite and things run so smoothly here.
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	Not knowing the language or understanding the reasoning behind policies and choices.
Miss most about home country	Being able to buy shoes that fit. I wear a size 11. I visit the US every year or two, so I don't really miss it.
How has living and working in another country changed you?	It has helped me grow up. I have learned that my answer is not the only answer. I have to let others decide for themselves. I have also come to recognize how powerless and insignificant I am.

Appendix E5: Transcript of the interview with John

Note: John referred to many of his workplaces and the cities he worked in by name. Cities have been abbreviated to a letter of the alphabet: for example, 'B city,' 'X city,' to protect John's privacy. Workplace names have been removed, where possible. John's wife is referred to as 'Misty' in this transcript.

Maria: This is an interview with John on the 31st of July 2011. John, do I have your permission to record this interview?

John: Yes you do.

Maria: Okay, thank you very much. For a start, could you tell me about your background?

John: Well, I'm from the United States. I was born and raised in Chattanooga, Tennessee, which is in the south east United States and - as far as ancestry or ethnicity basically, I guess, northern European. My father has many ancestors going back to England and Scotland, my mother's adopted but I think it's safe to say she's very much northern European (laughs). Then, let's see... I grew up in Tennessee, basically lived there all my life. When I was 16, I became an exchange student in Germany for one year and then I came back and finished up high school and went to New Orleans for university for four years and, from New Orleans, I came back to Chattanooga. I was there for about a year - I was in university. I got to go back to Germany a couple of times - once to study and once to visit, but once I got out of college - I was a business major - undergrad international business and marketing - I was very interested in going overseas and working, but didn't know exactly what I would be doing. I thought I would be like an importer exporter something like that but (pause) after about a year trying stuff like that and not having any success, I took a job teaching in Korea which... I was actually looking in the Miami Herald one day, looking for export import jobs, and I saw this 'teach English in Korea' so I thought, 'well, that's something.'

And so I went to (*B city in*) South Korea and I taught there for two years. Had the time of my life but the school changed their contracts so, after they said, "If you want to renew, you'll have to teach more hours and we're going to put a third person in your apartment," and all those kind of pretty radical changes, so I decided not to do that and I went back to the States for a couple of years. I tried some sales jobs - I was a ballroom dance teacher, which mostly meant selling ballroom dance lessons to old ladies, sold insurance for a while but didn't enjoy it.

So then I next came to Japan and was with a school which - big operation and for the record, I said, "this seems kind of criminal to me," so when they went under I didn't blink an eye - I thought I saw that coming. Anyway, I came to Japan. I worked in (*K city*) - it's this wonderful city. So I was with (*X school*) for about a year and I thought, 'I need this until I find something better.' Then I went to work for a small language institute - and that was really wonderful, I had a good time. I had a good time with (*X School*) - more of a pressure cooker kind of thing, and then I knew that if I wanted to keep doing it, I needed to get a Master's degree and I was fortunate in that I met some people who were graduates of (*Y School, in the United States*) and they told me about that and so I started making plans to go (*there*). So I spent a grand total of two years in (*D city*) and then went to (*Y School*), got my Master's degree, and I did a teaching internship at (*a university in the United States*). So that was like about eight weeks, I guess, and, at the end of that, then I went back to finish classes but I got along with the boss and the other faculty so, when I graduated, they actually

gave me a job starting the next fall. So I was with (*this American university*) for a year, and between the end of classes and starting with (*the American university*), I also taught at an eight week camp for high school students coming to the US at a prep school (pause) and that was a pretty good experience.

So, basically, after a year teaching in the US, I was very much wanting to get back overseas. And, while I was at (*Y School*), I met the woman that I later married - she and I, we graduated, and we came to Japan to work together, and we were hired by a Lutheran church - they owned some schools over here. And, on the one hand, it was quite good because we came, we took Japanese lessons for the first six months - they paid for it - they didn't pay you a lot, but they're paying you to be a student so who cares! - they cover your expenses! And then we were going to go down and then teach at a high school that they had back in (*D city*) and they sent me to one school, sent Misty to another school because of the need they had there. Used to be, there's a boy's school and a girl's school, but today they're both co-ed and one of them's a really good school and one of them is a really bad school, and I kind of got the bad one (laughs). It could use a good scrubbing and paint job. Basically, it didn't have a very good reputation but I didn't see a lot of hope for it - I mean, the administration was very obsessed with trying to build a soccer team and meanwhile, the bathrooms hadn't been cleaned in forever - which is stunning in Japan, you know! And they would let the kids do the cleaning and stuff like they always do here, but everything was so backward and confused that I just - I'd had enough so, after a year there, we took a job at junior college, which is in (*F city*). And they hired us for two years, and the whole thing was, you could only stay two years, and so, when we were ready to do our two years, a few months before the two years was supposed to be up, my boss says, "Can I talk to you?" And I'm like, Uh, okay sure." He didn't want to talk to me much, so this is making me a little nervous - but we go in my office, and he says, "Listen, if I was able to get both of you hired on for one more year, would you be willing for one of you to work a fourth year and the other one work part time for a fourth year?" And I said okay, because they were closing that major, there's going to be no more English graduates - the school wanted to focus on developing its music program - and they are quite successful, this is a while back I mean, they really did invent something - folks love music. They needed two people to teach out the program, close it out, and people already knew what was going on, so, after I agreed to that, they actually came back and said, "Okay we'll hire both of you as full timers, both for two more years," so we got four years out of this two-year deal - we were really happy about that.

And then - we weren't too savvy about job-hunting in Japan in the beginning, simply put, I was looking in the wrong places and really didn't know what I was about looking - and so we took a job in Korea. Well, actually, Misty took a job in Korea, I should say, because Japan finishes their school year, they graduate 'em at the end of March - so Misty agreed to come over and start working at the beginning of March, because Korea, that's when they start, at the beginning. I stayed back, attended the graduation ceremonies, closed out the apartment and everything and, for a year, I played househusband when I got to Korea.

We were at (*Z University*), which is down in (*B city*), and we had hoped that they might hire me later. You know, when I first got there, they were, "Oh yeah, yeah, we want you both to work there," and all that stuff, but it became obvious that wasn't going to happen. So then we took a job at (*W University*) which - they have a campus in (*C city*), and we were hired by the (*C city*) campus. We were there for three years,

and, after three years, they didn't renew the contract, which was fine because we had applied here and got it, and were just thrilled to be back.

Maria: Do you think you will stay here, in (*G city*)?

John: Well, generally speaking, whenever we take a job, the idea is to stay as long as possible because, every time we move, every time we go to a new place, it takes something out. Here, at (*G city, at the university*) where I work, they have - as they do everywhere - they have a policy that occasionally they follow: you've got a one year contract, and you can stay up to five years. They've got people who've been there 20 years so, you know, what they used to do is basically, after five years they would say, "Go away for a semester, and then you can reapply and come back." - In fact, I started work with a guy in that situation, he took six months off and he came back, There's another guy who they just said - just basically depends on how many teachers they need, which semester and everything. So, if they give us five years, we'll be happy, and we'll move on, and if they give us ten years, we'll definitely just take that. So early on in my career, I noticed that English teachers, particularly in the language institute scene, because so few of them are actually committed to teaching and education, spend a lot of time talking about what they're going to do when they go home or how long they should stay and all this sort of stuff. But I figured out that you don't really have to worry about that, the country will let you know when it's time, you know: they'll change your contract, they'll enact a silly law, the boss will cut your pay - something will come up, and then you just go. So I don't really spend a lot of time thinking, 'I'll do this five years, I'll do this ten years.' As long as the cheques keep coming in, and the situation's agreeable, I don't worry about it.

Maria: Do you ever wish you'd stayed in business? Waited till you found a job in business?

John: Since when I first came over, I would just go - you know, I did the full two years without visiting the States and things, but, since I got married, now I have a mother and a mother-in-law who will kill me if I don't bring my wife home to see them every year so - though when it was just me and my parents, they didn't seem to care, but anyway now - but no, it's important, you know, and my parents are getting old, and they do try to visit, and whenever I go home, I try to see as many old friends as I can, and family members and such. And every time I go back to the States, it's the same thing, "The boss is hard, the job is hard, the taxes are high, everything's expensive, I'm broke, I'm in debt, so when are you gonna move back to America?" After that sales pitch? (laughs). No, I think it's a great job, I don't regret anything about being in it, you know. Maybe if anything, I wish I'd started a little sooner and been a little more consistent at it.

Maria: Okay. You kind of answered some of the other questions I'm going to ask, but I'm going to ask the next one anyway, which is, why did you become a teacher?

John: I knew I wanted to do stuff overseas - and, like I said, that's why I became an international business major, that's why I became an exchange student. You know, I'm from Chattanooga, Tennessee and, at an early age, I pretty much divided the world map into two sections, Chattanooga, and better than Chattanooga. So I just had that urge from an early age to get out and see things and do things - and I got to go to Germany, stuff like that, you know, I got to Europe, I was really interested in that, and then I started becoming interested in Asia, I took an interest in martial arts, cos during the 1980s, when I was coming of age, everything was about Japan. "Japan is gonna take over the world," you know, watching movies, and people were kind of getting interested in it, and so I wanted to go and see it. And my university had some

students from Japan and I became friends with some of them. And so I was interested in Asia, but again, I still thought I was going to be in some sort of business capacity.

Actually I just came across an ad in the Miami Herald by chance you know - looking back, it's crazy, it says, "Wanted: teachers of English to go to Korea," and I thought, 'Well, I'm a native speaker, surely I can teach this,' - which is absolutely crazy now, knowing what I know, but- I called the guy, and he started talking to me, and it was pretty much, "Where do we send the ticket, kid?" I didn't know anything about the company, I didn't know anything about (*B city*) - they said, "Do you want to go to Seoul, (*B city*) or Busan?" So I get out a map and I see Busan's on the coast and I'm sort of, "Send me to Busan," and at the last minute like, "Well, would you go to (*B city*)?" And I was like, "Yeah, okay," and I got there. And, for two years, I spent a lot of time thinking about what else I was going to do, but I also just started thinking, 'this is actually pretty interesting.' And once I went back to the States and tried working at the regular jobs or whatever, I didn't enjoy it, and so, when I came to work at (*X school*) - I found them at a book that was about teaching English around the world - it was like a 'talk your way around the world' or something. This is before the internet, so books like this were goldmines, and I applied to (*X school*) and they presented themselves like, "Oh we're this crème de la crème upper echelon sort of thing, you come work for us and we'll teach you a lot about teaching and you can even become a trainer" and all this stuff. And it was nonsense but I did come up with - I won't complain, I want to make a life doing this sort of thing.

And there was an older fellow I worked with: he would tell everybody he was 42 - I would guess he was about 60. But some students would tell me that sometimes he'd be nodding off in class and such, because he was trying to burn the candle at both ends: he was trying to hang out with these young teachers and go party and things like that and then go work and such. He just struck me as sad, you know. I was just thinking 'this doesn't happen to me. I'm not going to be 50 years old, doing 8 hours at (*X school*).' So, at that point I knew I would need to get a Master's and get into that. At that time I thought 'well, I need to go get an English degree, English linguistics or something,' but then I started hearing about the MA TESOL -things like that- just by meeting some people who worked at universities. And I never hung out with my colleagues - this was when I was in the institute scene - basically, I'd teach my institute classes, I was real big into martial arts, I'd go work out, I'd go home and go to sleep. I wasn't a drinker, I wasn't a partier, I wasn't a late night person. And when I started meeting teachers in the universities and such who were serious about teaching and thinking about their students, I was like, "Okay this is where I need to be, I'm living in a different camp here," and so I - this is kind of a gradual thing, it wasn't like I had a grand plan starting out.

Maria: I'm going to jump ahead here and say which country or workplace was the most memorable, and why? I mean, it's sounding like it was (*X school*)...

John: Memorable? I remember them all quite well. I don't know - are we looking for good, bad or?

Maria: Your choice

John: Well, I remember all of them well, and every last one of them was significant and important, you know.

Maria: How so?

John: Let's see, the first thing, (*B city*), that gave me my start - I mean, I'm sitting here right across the table because that school was willing to take a chance on a

completely untrained kid, pretty fresh out of college, and let him go into a camp classroom. I finished up those first two years and I went on to Japan and I went to grad school -all those things- and I was really happy to get the opportunity to come back to Korea because I felt like I owed Korea something. I mean, I worked hard and I tried my best when I was there those first two years, but I just didn't have the training, I didn't have knowledge, and so, there was this sort of 'one day I'm going to go back there and I'm going to give Korea quality lessons, something I couldn't have done before.' So the first time I went to Korea, Korea was giving me a chance, the second time, I felt like I was trying to pay back something. And those first two years - you know, I made mistakes, but I made progress. I learned a lot about myself, learnt a lot about the classroom, met wonderful friends, fellow teachers, students, Korean administration - I wouldn't give up those two years for anything. You know the movie Groundhog Day - came out a few years ago - that wasn't a bad place to have groundhog day - you know, if you had to keep repeating that for the rest of your life, you'd do all right.

(*X school*). (*X school*) was a mean damn company that sat around, I'm convinced, day after day thinking 'how can we keep selling these English lessons without hiring any teachers and without actually teaching any lessons?' Cos it was very much a sales driven place. The people who got promoted were very much kiss up kick down types and it was all just about numbers and processing people through without much care for doing something good for students. After about 14 months, I was just like, "I just can't do this anymore." The thing was, I'd gone in, and a friend of mine wanted to meet me for lunch that day, and - every day when you went in, they handed you your schedule, and you could have lunch at one of three times, and so you didn't know until you walked in the door. So I just told my friend, "Well, we'll meet for lunch but let me call you and tell you what time it is." And I didn't have a cellphone -most people didn't have cellphones in those days anyway - this is '97, n-n-no, '98 at that point and so I walk in and, I had seen other people use the telephone, and I got my schedule - called my friend, She was, "Hi." And I said, "Hey, it's going to be 12 o'clock, I'll see you then, bye."

And then later they asked me if I would come in without pay and learn how to do this course—come in without pay on your day off, and do this training so you can teach courses so we can sell more lessons basically, and I'm like, "Well, no I'm not going to do that, one, you're not gonna pay me, and two, I've already done that training and it's a mess, you haven't thought this out yet, and you don't even have the materials on this shelf that we're supposed to have so get it together and we'll talk about this." And there was this pause and, I walk by my desk and right then, I turned to a fellow teacher and I said, You watch, within two weeks they're going to come back and they're gonna wanna write me up a complaint about something that'll be completely unrelated to this." - Sure enough, about four days later, the AT (which stood for Assistant Trainer, but we liked to call him Another Teacher), he comes and says, "I understand you used the phone without permission." That other teacher was right there, I said, "What did I tell you?" And he smiled and he said, "You said that they would come in and complain about you - something completely unrelated." So I told the guy -I just said, "Walk away, right now. Just walk away and let it go." I said, "Here, you can have this." I took out ten yen, because that's what a phone call cost in those days, and I hand it to him and I said, "I wanna receipt for that money by the end of the day. At the end of the day, if you don't have a receipt for me," I said, "you give me back my ten yen and don't ever mention it to me again." The next day was

my day off, and I went down to the International Centre and there just happened to be an ad up: "We need a teacher at this language institute." Snatched it off the board (laughs), walked in, sat down, had a nice chat, they said, "Well listen, we can't hire you until - I think it was November, it's like October right now - but we need you to come and do some part-times on the side, and if it works out, we'll hire you." I said fine. So I did it, you know. And actually, when I handed in that - I go in and get the resignation sheet and I fill in the form and I go and hand it to the manager, who was, I'm sorry, just a mean person, she just lived to give trouble to teachers. I didn't really catch that much trouble - most of it was what I saw being done to other people. And I hand it to her, and she says, "What's this?" And I say, "It's my resignation." And she said, "Are you serious?" I said, "Yes." She said, "Why?" And I loved it ... I said, "Because I don't like you" (laughs). And she says, "I'm being serious." And I says, "I'm being dead serious. Because I don't like you." And then the assistant area manager calls me up and he's like, "I understand you're leaving." And I say, "Yeah." And he says, "Do you mind if I ask you why?" And I say, "Probably for the same reason that the other 13 teachers who have left during the last eight months have left, you know," I said, "Take your pick: you're incompetent, you're mean spirited." "What do you want from me?" It's just this whole bizarre thing, but I got out of there. I go work at the new institute, I get - (*X school*) was a growing up experience, I mean it was educational - like I said, I met that old man and I said, "This cannot happen to me!" I mean, you owe your friends, you owe your enemies more, you know, so I owe (*X school*). They got me going, and they got me to (*D city*).

I mean, I'd never heard of (*D city*), they said, "Where do you wanna go teach?" and I had a choice of cities and I said, "I'll pick (*a major city*)" because I had some friends in the area - (*D city*) is somehow (*that major city*)! So anyway, they sent me down there and I had a great time but I really worked it - gosh what a wonderful place - I mean, adult students who wanted to be there, great atmosphere, just very very peaceful, it wasn't factory feel - I was able to take these kind of cookie-cutter lessons that (*X school*) was drilling into you (because they used the same textbook at this school) and I was able to add some originality and be a little more student-centred and focused. I almost didn't go to grad school. I was just like, "This is so great, this is so wonderful," but some friends of mine who had done grad school encouraged me to go, they said, "Look you can always go back and do this but you will need to use that degree." It was wonderful, I think if I could just recreate an institute job for myself, that would be it. I was content, I was almost ready to go on but fortunately some people were encouraging me.

My high school job? I didn't like that one little bit at all. I'm not ready for the whole Japanese high school scene anyway because it's very much about test prep and uniforms and not much about education, and I was in a not particularly good one anyway.

The junior college in (*F city*)? If that boss called me tomorrow - I would work it out, I would get out there to him. I still see my two bosses from that job - about once a year we go to dinner and, even when we were living in Korea, we would fly, we would stop off in Japan and we would meet and- That was just four wonderful years, wonderful students. We saw the students every day. And we had 'em for two years, and you can just make such great progress, it was really really wonderful, I was happy as can be.

So that - yeah, boy, that job in (*D city*), that would be kind of something, wouldn't it? (laughs).

And in Korea, working at (*W University*), all I did was teach the freshman mandatory conversation classes. I had two preps a week, cos I had Level 2 and Level 3, that was it. And yeah, used to just teach the same class about five times but in that I learned a lot because they were so disinterested – uninterested, I should say – they had their major this just didn't matter, it was something they had to do. But Misty and I, we did what we said, we did presentations, we became IELTS examiners during that time, so, while the work was quite simple and straightforward, we really did something with it.

But this that I just finished up was hands down the toughest semester of my career because - highly motivated kids, very heavy workload and then also just I wound up assigning myself too much in terms of homework. I needed to be doing activities to get them ready for the big assignment and just grade the big assignment – I was trying to grade everything along the way, “Hand that in, I'll correct it for you, hand that in,” and yeah, I was just- seven days a week.

I can't pick one: they were all memorable – they were all good, the high school's about the only one that I choose to forget because I didn't feel like- I didn't really accomplish anything.

Maria: Okay. What teaching tools or tricks do you consider to be indispensable?

John: Good judgment. That's about the only one I'll throw out, because one of the things I have discovered and, in fact, despite my saying, “Don't do this,” I just did it to myself. The mistake that teachers most commonly make, I would say, is we're trying to teach at the last school. We're trying to teach the last bunch of kids. It's like, we go to this school, we learn all this stuff, we get all these great lessons - and we transfer and we think, ‘hey it's going to be - boy these sure were good techniques I used before let me see if I can do them over here’ and it's sabotaging. I thought to myself, ‘I'm not going to try and repeat anything’ and my lessons were very different, I didn't try to repeat anything out of the lessons. But, I found at my last school the only way I could get them to accomplish was to give them a quiz every week – and knowing you're going to be graded every week was what got them in the door. These kids show up anyway, so what am I sitting here trying to, you know, read 70 essays a week – it's just, it was just insane (laughs).

But in terms of tools, I've taught with no chalkboard, no whiteboard, no computer access whatsoever. I've taught in pristine facilities like I teach now, I've taught in pretty grimy facilities too. So I think, to be really good, you just have to be one who can improvise. You're going to get assigned textbooks you don't like – if you do this career long enough, it's just, “Here's the book I don't care what you think, teach from it.” You're going to get put in rooms that are too small, rooms that don't have those things that you deem necessary. I've taught students that I can see every day, and that's ideal – hey consistency, that's indispensable, but I've taught kids I saw once a week, I've taught people who - they just came into the school whenever they felt like it, and some days they're assigned to me and someday they were assigned to someone else, but you had to take whatever was thrown in front of you. – Really, what I pulled out of the institute scene is, I can work a damn long schedule with the most ridiculous, I mean, cartoonishly silly, you know, requests being put upon me, and make it work. And that's where that judgment come in, of knowing when to do and what to do--and that just comes in time, from making a lot of mistakes.

Maria: What teaching principles underpin your teaching? What has changed, if anything?

John: Well, at this point I guess I'm supposed to break out with, "Well, I have a student focused learning perspective" (laughs). What's changed is trying to be a little more realistic about what it is I'm asking people to do. I don't think we always appreciate how hard it is to perform in a foreign language. And I don't think I really - - in the beginning - I know I didn't think a lot about their private lives and their home lives and things. A lot of my students right now, two hour commutes, two hours in, two hours out, I've got kids living in (*other cities*), and I've got one girl that's out in the countryside. And I live right next to campus - I forget something, I run back to my apartment and get it, they forget something I mean it's done, okay, they forgot it - it's not like they're irresponsible or things like that but the point is, people forget things. They do have insanely high course loads here, so there's just a lot on them. And even when I was in the institute scenes, you're talking about people who worked full time jobs and things like that. So I've learned a lot about just thinking about what's going on outside and I kind of ask myself, 'Well, when I sit down to study Japanese, how much can I accomplish in an hour? Okay how long would it take me to accomplish this assignment?' Now, all my students are higher level than I am, so that's not a fair comparison, but I do have an idea in that sense, 'Oh gosh, I know this word but I have to look it up again.' You know, these things are realities for language learners. So, picked up on that and then I've also just come to -- language learning is a sport, it's a physical skill. It's speaking, writing, reading, listening, so it's about being a good coach as opposed to a presenter and so I always understood that they had to talk and they had to do things, but sometimes I've felt a little too much pressure to present this in a clear way as opposed to giving them good practice and set ups that they can just go over and pick it up so that's probably, yeah, a difference

Maria: Okay. How would you describe your teaching self?

John: I'm an English teacher is what I say to people. Professor -- unless you have your PhD or your EdD, something like that, that just seems a little presumptuous. Also, a professor professes, he stands before the class and says, "These are things, we're going to do this now" - I don't do that - get in circles, do these drills - now coach - I would feel comfortable with coach, except people would look at me like I was crazy, so English teacher is just the most convenient term.

Maria: How have your ideas about teaching changed? Over time or from country to country?

John: From day to day. A lot of it's about relearning things, possibly just trying to look things over, and I do uncover a lot that's why I like things at Kotesol and JALT - I'm a workshop junkie, because I swipe other people's ideas. Marriage to another teacher helps, she's got a lot of great ideas, I swipe a lot from her. But I think one of the things I have learned is I am just - naturally me - I'm actually not particularly well suited to the teaching profession. (pause) Not to say I can't do it or something, but it's kind of 'what's natural for me?' I tend to be kind of a fast-paced, let's get this out of the way type, quick decisions, 'what are we going to do?' Whereas with teaching you just have to kind of see how they go. It's too easy for me to get attached to my lesson plan as opposed to look(ing at) what's going on. I get angry -- not like where I swear at the students but it's just things make me wanna - but I think in that sense teaching's good for me, because then it's just personality flaws basically, if you will, but then anyone who has them should work on them, and teaching provides that opportunity to say, "You know I don't feel comfortable but this is what is required so I have to challenge myself and do it." So I think the profession's helped

me be more self-aware, self-examining, self-critical and hopefully working towards being a better person.

Maria: Okay cool. What do you remember of your own schooldays? Who was, or who were the teachers who influenced you the most when you were in school, and why?

John: (pause) I had a weird relationship with school. Generally speaking, I made the grades. There's -- some days better than others. I mean it was never difficult, once I sat down and I had to do this, I had to do it and get it done, but sometimes I'd get distracted. In elementary school, they were constantly testing me for learning disabilities, ADD, such stuff (laughs) and I always came back a negative, and, as I used to say, "Well, it wasn't my fault this stuff was boring" (laughs). But I liked my teachers for the most part and I never skipped school or never considered dropping out. I was a loud kid, but I wasn't a real troublemaker, I wasn't a real troublemaker. I mean, if the teacher told me to sit down, I sat down, as soon as she turned away, I might start talking again, but - I mean, I wasn't a rough kid generally, even in junior high and high school.

Junior high I had a hard time. They sent me to this really big junior high school – this is an idea that came, I think, out in the '60s in the States, they closed down all these small schools and opened these mega-schools because what's better than a building with a thousand teenagers in it, right?! And so they'd bring you from all parts of town. I think I could have done much better in junior high. Here I am: 12, 13 years old, sitting next to 15 year old felons, and I don't say I liked it - guns, drugs, all this other sorts of pills– that was the only time I – that was a stage when I dreaded going to school, and my mom picked up on it, so she said, "When you get to 9th grade, you can go to a Catholic high school in town." We weren't Catholic, but it had a good reputation. My dad was against it but my mom, she fought hard, so thank goodness for moms! And then I went to high school, and again, it was great, I loved it, I had a good time, I had friends, I enjoyed my classes and I went to Germany for a year while I was there, so that's a really nice school.

In terms of teachers, I think to generalise school, there were actually a lot of teachers that I liked, especially in elementary and high school. Junior high, not so much. Not to say that I didn't have a few good ones, but I kinda just erase that time you know, not erase it but I don't think about it so much. I had a great History teacher in high school, he was– I'm a history buff today man, I love reading history, and I think he was part of that, cos he knew his subject, he knew it well, and he could just tell you these stories - cos that's really what history is - it's stories about what happened. And he did the coolest thing – he taught history backwards. So we started with the Presidential elections that preceded – so that was '84, I guess – it was like '87 when I had him so we started with '84, and went back to '80, and so we'd go back, to the Vietnam War, to the Korean War with the north, we were working our way backwards and such, which is good because – in America what they do is, they start back with 1776 and work forward to World War II and we win it - wow, we're out of time! I guess we don't get to talk about that disaster that was Vietnam (laughs)! So it was kind of convenient I thought, but he worked us backwards, which was a great thing, I thought. I had a great Math teacher – he taught me Algebra and Geometry. I had an English teacher who I didn't get on too well with – she and I disagreed a lot, but I had a lot of respect, and I think she knew that I liked her, it was just we saw things different and I wasn't shy about letting her know (laughs). So...

Maria: This is just a quick one, because we've talked – you've talked about it in detail, but, would you like to put a number to, how long have you been teaching EFL? EFL not SL.

John: Okay, 2 years in Korea, and then two in Japan followed by another five in Japan so what – 9 there, and then three in Korea so 12, and this half year here, so 12 and a half overseas, and then a year in the States.

Maria: Yeah, okay. All right, and we're almost at the end. Last few questions. So, what was the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country, for you?

John: Depends on the country. (pause) Japan is pretty simple. I speak enough of the language that I can handle whatever day-to-day situations come up, I like the country a lot, (pause) I think also now that I've been at it long enough, it's sort of, I understand the rule, it's their country, I'm just living in it, you know. And I think that's-- initially when you come into this, they're doing it wrong. But there's a right way and there's a wrong way, but they're always going to do it their way.

Maria: You mentioned in your survey that you found Korea very challenging.

John: Very, yeah. Boy. What can I say about Korea? I've got Korean friends, I've had many happy days and great success because of Korea, I've actually got a handful of family –career teachers- teachers who used to teach in Korea are now here and (laughing) one of them said a weird thing the other day, "Korea's where you go to get good stories." (laughs) I mean just crazy stuff. Yeah he made the other comment that, "Korea's good but it's just their culture's no good." (laughs) But I understand where he was -- like, you have these Korean friends and if you've got the right job over there, life can be good and things like that but it's like – the line is at grammar, you know it's -I had these visions of Korean elementary school teachers saying, "Jinwoo, your paper's wrong, you wrote, it is sunny – you see, there's the sun, you must say it isn't sunny, because if it's gram- if it's factually correct, it must be grammatically wrong."

And it's just like everything that came out of anybody's mouth is a lie, from the Customs agents, from my bosses, from my students. Actual conversation: "Oh teacher teacher, please let me take the quiz from last week." "Oh no, you can't do that- I told you you had to take it on the day." "Oh no, but last week I was – I was not on campus, my aunt died, I had to go to the funeral." "I saw you on campus after the class." "Oh but I was very sick." "You were playing soccer." "Oh but my senior made me." This like - three seconds ago, your aunt was dead and you're standing here shamelessly. Now in his mind, he's saying 'now I told that teacher three good lies and he still wouldn't let me take the test.' I'm sorry, but there's something wrong with that. And, mutual friends -- you know, he left that school, and they don't give him his severance pay, it's just one story after another. Anyone you talk to - they've all been lied, cheated out of money, and it's just a mean damn system – there is a mean streak in that country. And like I said, I made out pretty well because I figured out- I learned how to work the system, I learned a way to work the system. But most of the terrible things I saw were done to other people, and often done to other Koreans. Like Korean war veterans will tell you from back in America - the sickest things I ever saw were what Koreans did to each other. I did a teacher training program in (*B city*), I didn't mention that anywhere, for the summer, and so all my students were junior high and high school teachers and I asked them to write about experiences and stuff and this woman was talking about her husband's friend had got in financial trouble and asked her husband to co-sign a loan to help him save his

business, and the next day he's on a plane to China with the money, you know! And I read Michael Brain's book, *The Koreans*, and there's countless stories of a lot of people ripped off by the relatives.

Membership training, you see this – forcing kids to drink, illegally in most cases cos they aren't 20 years old yet, and it's – 'I can't wait to get promoted so I can start treating other people like garbage,' and I just see a meanness in that country. I was becoming a racist and actually I really felt that I had to get out because I wasn't liking me. Some of the things I would say – I don't want to be this person. But, as I mentioned earlier, learn how to work the system. Misty, my wife, says she's glad that I was there because I tell her, "You've got to go in there and bang your fist and raise hell." – You walk into an office, "I need the form for next semester that you have." "Well, I don't have that." "Well I was told to come and get it from you." "No, I don't have that." "Well, then you need to call and find out who has it, because you're my only contact on staff, you have to get that stuff for me, I can't get it, well, I'm going to stand right here till you get it for me." – There'll be this mean look, and then, without even thinking about it, opens up the top desk drawer, there it is, right on top. She just didn't want to give it to me. And this is not a one time this happened – this is incessant, you know. "Oh you can't get this refunded, oh you can't get the money for this, oh you can't change classrooms." Yeah you can, but you've got to raise hell, you have got to be a bastard! And once you do that, no problem. So it's like, if you're ready to be a son of a bitch every day, you can get on fine, but if you just want to get along with people, get ready to be a human punching bag, you know. And it was just like, I'd rather be someplace where I'd say, "Could you please help me?" and have a reasonable chance of getting a "Yes."

Maria: Yeah. Okay. How in your opinion has living and working in another country changed you?

John: How has it changed me? That's a little bit tough to answer because, when I started, I was 25, now I would like to think – I'm now 42-- I'd've done some growing up anyway (laughs). I grew up a lot. And I think that being overseas helped that. I figured out there's more than one way of doing things, that there's no right way, because well, if you do it this way, you're going to give up this, and if you- if you do it the American way, you give up certain things, but then again, if you do it the Japanese way, the Korean way, you give up certain things, there's no perfect way of going about things. And it's just a question of 'what do you value?' And I recognise that 'well, I don't value that, but that's what you want and that's what most of the people in the society want, that's kind of where it's gonna have to be.'

I learned some Japanese, I read Hiragana, Katakana, and some kanji – I learned to read the Korean hangul, I never learned to speak in Korean really, other than just taxi language and restaurant language, I've seen and heard things that I wouldn't have seen or heard otherwise, eaten food I never would have heard of, my life is certainly different than – you know I had my 20 year high school reunion recently, and let me tell you something, I wouldn't trade places with anybody I saw at the reunion. I don't own a car, which is great, I ride a bicycle. I get five or six months a year vacation and I spend my day with the greatest kids – I mean, that's one thing about it, that's, what's the difference between Korean and Japanese students? Nothing really, I mean they are really sweet nice kids, you can sit down there and you know, "Well a Korean child is more likely to dah dah dah, a Japanese child is more likely - is a little more a little less outgoing." – Not for me, the difference between Japan and Korea for me is that in Japan, the three schools where I taught, so three out of four, or three

out of five, I felt like the administration was very much for the students. Two of them I felt like their heads were in class, but I always had these great students wherever I was.

In Korea, of the first place I worked in, the language institute, the first few years, I loved Korea, the students were great, the administration was great, all this stuff, whatever grief there was I was shielded from. When I went back to the university scene though -- and so, a lot of it I'd say talking about Korea, sometimes I'm really talking about university, but I just felt like the universities I worked in, the administrations were just staffed by anti-humanity or something you know (laughs). It's like they weren't really thinking about the kids. So in terms of how it's affected me, I am who I am, and I have a great life, and I wouldn't trade it for anything but - saw a lot, heard a lot, but I wouldn't have it otherwise. And I can't imagine not doing this. -I remember a very long time in Korea, meeting a man, he was in his 80s, he had a Japanese wife and he'd just retired, and he was gonna live the rest of his life in Japan, he'd already been - he'd showed up when he was in his early 20s, so it's like 60 years now, and he had a couple of kids, they went on to the US and they were working and living - they were bilingual, but when you're retired, travel becomes a bigger deal, so when you retired to the States, he was with the family members, they go back and they're still in good health, and he made the comment to me, he says, "I guess I'll never go to America again." And at that point, I got to thinking about never going to another country. But at this point in my career, I would say the words, "You'll never go to Japan again," would rattle me a bit more. And in fact I saw, recently I'd seen an interview on youtube of a professional wrestler - he was quite popular when I was a kid, when I was a kid, I used to watch quite a bit of wrestling, and I thought, 'wow, this guy's still around!' But he'd just retired from wrestling, there was a picture of him - he'd come over to Japan, which, his whole career, he'd come to Japan like sixty-seven times. And there's a picture of him after - and he's sitting with his head down, and the interviewer asks him, "What were you thinking?" and he said, "That I'd been there to Japan sixty-seven times and I was probably never going to be there again," and he started crying, and I was just like, "Yeah, that's the fear for me." - I think, living overseas -I used to have this vision, 'I want to go to all these different places,' now I want to go back places - I mean I want to go back to (*B city*), I want to go back to (*D city*), I want to go back to my home town. If at any point you told me, "You're not going back to one of these places," that would tear me up. Well, the thing is, you know the younger me, if you tell me, "Well you're not going to go back," well, there's all these other places, "Okay great, I'll see all these other places." But now, if you tell me, "You're never going to see these places -- whatever, at least I get to keep going back!" Well, I mean, I still want to see new places, but that's not going to be the end of my world. But if you told me, "List all your favourite places in the world, and you're not going to go back to these," that's what I think would be the worst. It'd be a tragedy.

Maria: Why did you choose to learn Japanese - and Korean for that matter?

John: Well, I didn't learn Korean, I picked up some Korean, big difference, Okay, I get to Korea first time, all for it, I'm going to learn, I learned German pretty well when I was in Germany, and I get to Korea and I'm -- five days a week, anywhere from 30 to 40 hours a week, in the classroom that's all in English, after class, students want to take you around -- cos I'm teaching college, college and adult at this language institute, they speak English. In those days Koreans couldn't leave their country easily- it was hard for them to get visas to travel and things and so the

opportunity to talk to a foreigner is a big deal. So all you had to do to make a friend in Korea in those days, just sit in a coffee shop with a beautiful look on your face, and people would just come, “Gee, do you like Korea? Do you speak English?” And so there was very little need for it. So I was taking hapkido five or six days a week, so I learned how to count, and I learned all the body parts for hitting and I learned food, and I learned the names of places around town – so I was picking things up – I remember going into a bookstore and asking for a textbook for learning Korean – they looked at me like I was crazy, “Well, everybody speaks Korean, why would you learn Korean?” They had books on learning English. So that just never happened.

When I came over to Japan, I was out, “Here, I really want to learn this,” and I did, you know. I got my hands on a couple of good textbooks and I put in more effort. Now that comes down to maturity too, cos I tell you, at 42, I’m studying harder and more consistently than I did at 30, and I actually make a decent effort so I think somehow it’s gotten easier for me to focus on these things. Sometimes it seems easier for me to remember stuff, especially the Chinese characters. But then we moved back to Korea and again I felt like studying and I just didn’t and I once said, in a much worse mood, “One day I’m going to write a book about Koreans and it’ll be titled, Nothing to Admire.” Harsh, and like I said, this is what I’m talking about in the end, me not liking myself. But, that said, I did start to notice that--I have found anybody who’s been here a month speaks some Japanese, it’s hard to find somebody who hasn’t learned the alphabet, who can’t conduct themselves pretty well, whereas I find in Korea, if you find a native speaker who speaks Korean – I mean a native English speaker who speaks Korean, it’s like, “Wow! How did you do that?” There’s like one or two in every faculty, but I’m thinking, ‘everyone’s able to speak some degree of Japanese, and what is that?’ And I do think there is this sort of thing, I speak personally and I’ve bounced this idea off a lot of other people and gotten agreement – you come to Japan and you think to yourself, ‘you know, the US could learn something from this.’ I mean, I don’t want to turn the US into Japan but this many thank yous and excuse mes is healthy for people. Putting your head down, valuing getting along more than being right, the friendliness, the orderliness, I mean there’s stuff to really admire, there’s things-- the service you get in restaurants and stuff like that – when you go home to the States- my wife, her first visit back to the States- she’d never been to Japan, she comes over here, and she went home to visit her family, and I had to stay and teach a camp over here. And I called and said, “Hey hon, how’s it going?” And she says, “Everybody’s fat and rude.” So you get to the States and it’s--I mean, I’m not saying Japan’s better than the US, but I’m saying, “Hey, we could learn something from this country!” I get to Korea, and it’s just like, “Oh you gotta drop the nationalism, drop the jingoism, drop the fantasies about how the IMF undermined your economy and then the UN is controlled by the US and they’re out to get you,” you know and how all these other conspiracies, theories that pass as common knowledge over there--the rudeness, the people breaking in front of you in line, pushing, the spitting inside of buildings, the public urination, the national inability to drive, it’s all of it is just like, “Man, get it together, and then I’ll learn your language.” - you know, that’s just kind of the feeling you have. And I’m not saying that that’s a right or good or healthy thing – like I say, I’m kind of exposing my own demons here, being honest and trying to give you some insight, because I feel generally bad, “Gosh why do I feel like this?” Hey, we’ve got a Korean professor here on campus, and he’s a nice man, I mean, I talk to him sometime, he’s generally a nice man, but he’ll just say something that will be typically Korean and it’ll just like make me crazy or something, and it’s wrong, I shouldn’t be like that, so

I do make an extra effort to be polite to him and everything, but I'm not going to deny that, gosh I have these shell-shocked left over feelings from my time.

Maria: Okay, last question. How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live? And why?

John: Oh well, it sure as heck ain't gonna hurt! (laughs) That's the most important thing, I think. It's not gonna hurt. Now I taught in the States – I had students from around the world, I couldn't go and learn 16 different languages. So, on the one hand, I'd say, "You need to learn how to teach people whose languages you don't speak." I mean, that's a good healthy thing. But not just language. The more you can learn about that country – that culture, those people, that would include that language – but that – I never learned to speak Korean but anything -- I'll warn my students *balli balli*⁴⁸, they would laugh and some of them would think 'yeah he speaks Korean', or somebody might ask me, "What's your favourite song?" and just being able to tell them a Korean song – I didn't study Korean language much in Korea, but I tried to read as much as I could about Korea, and every time I found myself reading a book about Korea, learning about the history, it helped. It made sense of things, it didn't erase any of the problems, it didn't make the actual interactions any easier, but it just gave some reason behind it.

I do think that it's important and a good thing for a language teacher to study a foreign language. To put yourself in that student. I've taken actually Japanese classes, we sit there at the desk, and we have the teacher teach stuff. Most of my progress has been made on my own. And I really wouldn't want to take a Japanese class, I mean I --don't it sounds crazy for a teacher – I don't like being in a classroom, I'd rather sit down with a book, and suss it out and have some Japanese friends drop by once in a while and say, "Hey, can you help me out with this part? I'm not getting it ... ok," and then move on from there. At this point it's actually important to me because I think, 'okay, I remember doing an activity like this in Japanese class, and I remember, it bored the hell out of me.' And so, having had those experiences helps me understand - define my teaching philosophy – you've got 90 minutes to fill, you need to – it'd be good to have about 9 activities. 10 minutes here, 10 minutes there, even if it's accomplishing the same thing or whatever, but telling kids, "Work on this for 30 minutes." Gosh, in a foreign language – and in your native language, that's reasonably doable, but more variety, in particular the lower the level, the more variety, the more change, I've decided -- and that's the sort of thing you learn from being a language student yourself, it's a humbling experience. It actually gets a little easier. But I'm able to help some of my newer colleagues -- very often-- "The kid's writing this, what and he's reading it and what in the world do they mean by that?" "Oh, they mean th-" —and it's translated back from Japanese, or I know the Janglish term, and I understand why they have problems that they do- they don't have articles in this language so, the more you have the better.

Maria: Okay, well, thank you very much!

⁴⁸ Quickly quickly

Appendix E6: Lackey's answers to the questionnaire

Age	35-39
Gender	Male
Nationality	English
Ethnic background (self-description)	White
Current country/workplace	Korea
Length of time in that country	4.5 years
Plans to stay in that country for	2 years
Current ELT workplace	In a university
Length of time at current workplace	3-4 years
Like best about current workplace	the holidays
Undergrad degree in	Business
Formal teaching qualifications	CELTA a Master of Education degree
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at secondary school.
How studied	Communicative activities and games
Teaching	Yes
Previous teaching workplaces	Korea - 4 months - Crap job Czech Republic - 13 months - Enjoyed the lifestyle too much New Zealand - 4 years - poor pay
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	3
First language	English
Languages spoken	0
Proficiency in languages spoken	English- Native Speaker
When started language learning	7
Native language of country where they work	No, not well enough for day-to-day interactions
Student of native language	Yes, I am.
A good teacher is	always learning about new ways to engage his/her students.
A good student is	keen to be in the class and motivated to learn.

Easiest way to learn another language is	having a sympathetic listener to engage with.
Best thing about working overseas	The number of hours and the long vacations available.
Best thing about living overseas	It is challenging but affords a good standard of living.
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	Overcoming cultural difficulties
Miss most about home country	The rain and general pessimism about life in general.
How has living and working in another country changed you?	I have a broader outlook on life and have more empathy for immigrant workers.

Appendix E6: Transcript of the interview with Lackey

Note: Other than Seoul, workplace and city names have been removed or changed to a description, in order to help maintain Lackey's privacy. Lackey's wife is referred to as 'Jane' in this transcript.

Maria: Ok, hi, this interview is with Lackey. Lackey, do I have your consent to record this interview?

Lackey: You do, yes.

Maria: Ok, the interview is on the 3rd of July. Right. Lackey, could you please tell me a little bit about your background?

Lackey: In what respect?

M: Your entire life.

Lackey: Oh, wow, okay. I was born in Gibraltar, my dad was in the Navy so he was stationed there and I was there for about six months and then we all moved to the south coast of England and that's pretty much where I grew up. I went to school there until I was eleven and at age eleven I went to a boarding school which was a school that was set up for sons of seafarers so it was a good quality public school as we call them in the UK but it was free for my parents to send me there so it was actually cheaper than going to a state high school and I stayed there until I was eighteen, I got my GCSEs there, I got my A levels there. For A levels I studied Business, Mathematics, General Studies and Politics and I failed Maths but I got good enough grades to get me into university and I actually went to (*name of*) University because I figured I hadn't really known the place much as I was, you know, between eleven and eighteen, so I thought it would be a good place to study - but before I went to university I spent a year in New Zealand - the gap year - year off - I was actually at a school helping out - not really doing any teaching at all just as kind of a general dogsbody kind of thing but it was a really life changing experience for me - then I went to university, did Business Studies - studied Business, had a year off - part of the degree was to do a year work experience - during that year I worked for (*a famous multinational company*) as a marketing assistant. I actually got hired the day (laughs) the day after they announced the news that they'd just lost billions and billions of dollars and they'd laid off like three hundred thousand people worldwide or something. Which was nice - to get hired then. So I spent a year there which was good - did okay in my degree - got a job as a project manager for a computer services firm - and did that for I think about three years, eventually becoming a senior project manager. During that time, got married and we decided to do some travelling - spur of the - you know kind of get out of the rat race. So we spent six months - I think it was 1999, winter of '99, we spent six months in (*resort name*) in France, running a ski chalet for another company - so we cooked and cleaned for around about ten guests, I think we had on average - ski during the day you know, cooking at night kind of thing.

And after that we were looking at what to do... Jane, my wife, had taken a TESOL certification - the Trinity TESOL which I think still runs. She did it in (*the city*) where we were living before we left for the ski resort thing, and she found a job for us in Korea. So that was what - the summer of 2000 - so we came to Korea in the summer of 2000, she was qualified, I wasn't, but that doesn't necessarily matter in Korea as you know. The hagwon that we worked at was not particularly good. We stayed for about four months - did a midnight run straight after payday, went to Jane's parents in the States, stayed there for about three months - kind of had

Christmas there spent a cold winter there and then we managed to get jobs in the Czech Republic, and they took me on even though I wasn't qualified. They took me because they recognised that I had taught and that I kind of knew what I was talking about. I studied - did a bit of self study - and we taught there for thirteen months and a lot of the teaching there was one to one business teaching you know. We would travel from the school to the business. But they also had exam courses so we did some FCE and CAE teaching for groups at the school for kind of post high school students, pre university students, so they could get their English language up and get their qualification, so they could go to a good university. And during the summer that I was in (*that city in the Czech Republic*), I took a CELTA course there and passed that. And it was really nice to do that with some teaching experience because I was able to understand where they were coming from and see where I'd maybe not been doing things as well as I could have done. So I did that and then - so that was the summer and then we stayed until, I think, the following March, and then we were all set to go to Japan but, at the last minute, a job offer came in from New Zealand, and I'd been keen to get back to New Zealand anyway after my year there, and so we took the jobs in New Zealand.

We stayed there for a year and really there we were catering to the Chinese market: they were flocking to New Zealand to get good IELTS scores so that they could go to either a New Zealand or an Australian university. And also at the time the Australian universities had started running foundation programs in the language schools, so I was actually teaching Marketing and Business Law to these Chinese students as part of (*an Australian university*) for them, and I ran the IELTS department during that time, so I learnt a lot about IELTS and managing teachers and - I mean this was less than a year after getting a CELTA qualification yeah. So after that we got keen on doing a DELTA qualification and the one that was in (*the city where we lived*) - we were kind of sick of (*that city*) by the time we were thinking about this, so we looked at this one place in (*another city in New Zealand*). And they'd been running it successfully for a few years, but there was a large drop in pay to go there, but we thought, "ah, you know, it will be good anyway - it will be good for our qualifications." And they were running an EAP course that they wanted us to teach on, so that was something new as well and so we went there and again, Chinese students on EAP courses getting them into New Zealand or Australian universities through IELTS and (pause) that was good except they didn't run the DELTA because they didn't have enough demand.

It was round about that time, I think, the second Lord of the Rings movie had come out, and NZ was really starting to become very popular for very rich people, and there was a housing boom and prices were going up but wages weren't, because all these rich people coming in, they weren't creating jobs, except for jobs in the service industry. Also at that time, or because of that, the NZ dollar was rising in value so it was becoming more expensive to go to NZ. So the Chinese market kind of dropped off. So suddenly there wasn't the demand, you know, that kind of thing. I started looking around for other things to do. I went into business running some activities for different language schools - so taking students on their kind of you know the Wednesday afternoon activity or the Sat- or the weekend activity we would manage that - our company would manage that. That didn't last very long - again the fact that the students weren't coming to (*the city*) in the numbers they had been kind of called that off. But I did manage to get a job as a head teacher of a smaller school so I went there and stayed there for about - I think it was about fifteen or sixteen months, about

maybe a year and a half - can't remember exactly and that school was in the process of kind of being wound up and sold, and by the time that was sold, we'd had our kids and I think I was actually earning ten to fifteen thousand New Zealand dollars less than I had when I first arrived in New Zealand. Jane wasn't working and, yeah we were pretty much living from week to week even though I was working harder and it was more stressful being a head teacher and stuff. And we had to keep lowering wages and sacking people and it just wasn't pleasant so we basically said, "right we gotta go, it's time for us to go." And it neatly coincided with the school being sold off to another company - and yeah, we just decided that's it. We had four years in NZ by that time and we went to the States again for the summer and had a really nice summer - looked around for jobs, had about four job offers: one was back in New Zealand, different school, running that, one was Kuwait, which was very good money, one was Korea, and one was Indonesia which was really good - which looked like a really good program and really nice kind of teaching experience it would have been - the (*names a specific teaching group*) group there. But around about that same time I think they'd had some volcano off and some ship had sunk and Jane was getting worried about going to Indonesia, and Kuwait, you know, wouldn't have been necessarily a nice place for the kids, so we ended up choosing Korea because, although we had left in 2000, it was the school we didn't like not the country you know: we'd actually enjoyed being in Korea quite a lot and we were kind of keen to come back. So although the teaching wasn't great, the pay wasn't great, we were still better off with the Korea job which was at (*name of*) University, where we ended up staying for four and a half years. And yeah, during that time - Jane managed to get a job six months later at the same place - that was kinda nice working together and (*the university's*) a really warm welcoming place. For us, it was good - general teaching there was Freshman, Sophomore kind of courses, but round about my third year, maybe two and a half years in, I got the opportunity to do an intensive teacher training program for a group of elementary school teachers and that was really nice because I got to kind of design the course and run the course with a group of teachers and it was a six month course with 30 teachers who you saw every day so that was really, really good and really different and being there got me - gave me an opportunity to be involved with Kotesol which was also nice because the work - well, compared to what I had been doing, teaching-wise, the work was not demanding - you know at a country university but anyway, after four years or so it was kind of time to move and look for a new challenge and yeah we were lucky enough - both of us were lucky enough to get jobs at (*a*) university here in Seoul which is where we are now, and we've just finished our first semester. There you go - that's a potted history - you don't get everything in there.

Maria: Pretty good, thank you. Yeah. So how long would you would you consider that you have been teaching EFL? Because it sounds like you've done ESL and EFL.

Lackey: EFL so that would be what - the four months in Korea - the year or so in Prague plus the five years here, so what about what does that come to ... six and a bit.

Maria: About seven years. Which country or workplace did you think was the most memorable? And you can answer separately like: which country was the most memorable, which workplace was the most memorable, and why?

Lackey: Oh, I don't know about the most memorable, I mean, I kinda remember them all for different reasons (laughs). I mean Korea because it was just the first and it was crazy new, you know, crazy new culture. It was so different from anything

else that we'd ever been near but I mean, I guess we've come back and stayed here so (pause) you know that was a good thing, the Czech Republic was just – was almost too enjoyable – being (*there*), we actually had to leave because we were having a bit too much fun. What else? New Zealand – I mean New Zealand's just a fantastic country – have you been?

Maria: Yes.

Lackey: Okay so you kinda have an idea of what it's like –it's just dramatic and beautiful and, I mean, we had our kids there, so that was pretty special you know. And back in Korea so, I don't know. I don't know if I can answer that in terms of country, they're all very memorable. Workplace. Yeah, they've all been different, so they've all been, they've all been memorable in their own way. I really really enjoyed being (*at the school in the Czech Republic*) because it was - it had a lot of variety. I mean, you were never teaching the same thing on the same day, you know, you might do a business course in the morning and, you know, some exam course in the afternoon or something. And, doing EAP, doing IELTS in New Zealand, working as a head teacher there, different levels – beginners, and so on, and then (*my first university here in Korea*) - you've got low level students, you know, twice a week - that was just strange but something to adapt to. And then doing teacher training, that was great, didn't even feel like I was working at the same place. And then (*my current university*) – you know, I mean they have a very robust program, we see the students three times a week there, three – two three hours – I guess three hours a week, and of course their level is pretty good as well, and we have a variety of courses we can teach and a lot of freedom to just go ahead and teach in that way, so I don't know. If you say memorable in terms of like which do you want to go back and do again maybe, I'd probably do, I'd probably choose the intensive English course with the teachers – I do like teacher training and that was - that was good to do but memorable, no, they've all been memorable, in their own way, really. So, I know that's not the right answer but ...

Maria: No, that's fine. Yeah. Now this one's going to be difficult.

Lackey: Okay.

Maria: Why did you become a teacher?

Lackey: Okay. That's not difficult, I mean there's one answer which is, we were looking around for something to do and Korea would take us –that's kind of one, but that's not really why I became a teacher, I think going to Korea and trying this out is kind of - you know the situation – you get thrown into the classroom and these kids and told to - you just teach – you speak English, you must know how to teach English – which is false, obviously, but - I enjoyed it, but I knew that I wasn't doing it right. I knew I was missing something, which is why I was really keen to do a CELTA course in (*the Czech Republic*). Once I reali- once I found out about it, kind of thing. But no, I mean I became a teacher, I guess, because I liked it. Funny, that was my first question at(*this*) university – they said, “I like teaching because,” and you have to finish the sentence and it - and my finish was, my ending to the sentence was, “because I like it.” That's why – that wasn't a difficult question.

Maria: Okay, all right. How would you describe your teaching self?

Lackey: I don't know. I don't – I find if I separate myself that much ... I'm pretty firm, I think, but I can be flexible when reasoned with, you know, if students have genuine reasons to not do something or they've made a mistake somewhere, I'm happy to accommodate them within reason. I like to mess around in the classroom, I

like to joke with the students but I do expect them to work hard, and students that work hard, I'll really help, as much as I can. Students that want to work hard, but they have problems, I'll help, students that are lazy and don't really want to be there you know – I'm happy to leave them alone because that's kind of their choice, and if I have 30 students in the class, yes, the good teacher would spend time motivating those students maybe, but I don't find I have that many, but I'm happy to leave them because they've made a choice and I respect that choice, they're just not ready to - they have to be in the class, they have to learn English, and they don't want to, and if they don't want to, they're probably not ready to yet. So it's just - it's time and energy and making sure what I'm doing is kind of targeted towards the students that it's going to help. I like variety - I like to have a good variety of activities in a class, generally, I like to think that I'll work before the class starts –that's my work time – and after, but the students need to work in the class time. I like to make sure that students move at least once during the class time, and that they talk more than I do in class, which doesn't always work because sometimes it's, you know, sometimes it's more content and sometimes it might be a lecture style, but in general you know. (pause) Pretty organised, so my – my timing doesn't always work, but I kind of have an idea of where I want the class to go and it tends to go that way. But I'm also happy to throw out a plan if something isn't working or the students want to take the class in a different direction. Yeah, that's ...

Maria: You may –I'll ask the question anyway and we'll see how you feel about it. The question is, what teaching principles underpin your teaching? How have these changed? Has anything changed? So I think you've described what you think of yourself as a teacher, would you say that these are the principles like – help the students who want to learn, and you know, respect the decision of the students who choose not to learn – would you say that that is a principle that underlies your teaching?

Lackey: Yeah, part- I mean just generally respect for students, yeah I don't feel – I don't like the idea of this kind of - this power trip that some teachers have, you know. Like I'm in charge and you'll do what I say, though I'll use that if I have to, of course, but I like to be at their level and kind of feeling like we're working together towards them learning, you know. And every student is different, and every student learns in a different way and I guess that's why I look for variety. But yeah, I think what I was describing is probably some sort of a set of principles though I don't think about it too much - every class is different and I'll approach classes in different ways depending on what they're like, and sometimes it takes me a wee while to find out what a class is like, how it's made up, who are the characters in a class, whether it's a quiet class or a rambunctious class and what activity is going to work with them and which aren't, you know. And things like that, I mean, example, we had a – (*this*) University, they do have a bit of a drinking reputation, and, especially, they're engineers - they have their seniors making them drink every five minutes. And they had a festival - a couple of weeks after midterm, I think, and this festival lasts most of the week, so it really disrupts the classes so, what I tried to do was - and we're not allowed to cancel the class, of course, you know, even though they're tired, hungover, still drunk, whatever, when they come in - so, rather than try and plough through what I had planned for that week, I gave them some homework which was in place of one class, so they didn't have to come to one class but they did have to do the work, otherwise they'd be absent – and it was quite a tough piece of work they had to do. Another one - I think the morning I was going in, I was like, "these guys

aren't going to be able to work today, they were out until four last night, they're not gonna" you know, so I literally wandered around campus and made up a treasure hunt and I said, "well, they've got to read these questions in English and work them out, they're outside, they're not going to fall asleep running around," and that was a very huge success: a lot of the students were like, "that was one of the best lessons we had," which was great. And I think the other lesson we just did something fairly light in the class as well, but adaptable, flexible, but within boundaries which the students kind of –which I'm happy to let the students know about early on, I guess.

Maria: How do you think your principles, or you yourself have changed over time as a teacher?

Lackey: I got older. More grey hair. Not less hair, I think I started off with this much hair but. How have I changed in terms of teaching? I think I used to be quite militant about not using the first language in class but that was when I had multilingual classes in New Zealand especially. And I think, having done a Masters - which I guess I left out of my life story bit - having studied it and done a Masters, I - letting students figure something out that's simple or help each other out in the first language, which is so much quicker than trying to do it in the second language, yeah, I chilled out about that a lot. Otherwise, I'm not sure. I'm not sure that I've changed an awful lot more - apart from just being more knowledgeable in terms of teaching style. Probably after four years in (*my previous workplace*), less knowledgeable about the English language than I used to be, but – I need to learn that stuff again, but yeah I don't know. I don't feel like I have, but I'm sure I have. No, I mean, always tried to treat a class as a class - not do the same thing every year every semester, I tended to do different things each time, and that hasn't changed, in that respect. Yeah just more experience, and the good things that come from having that experience, I think.

Maria: Are there any teaching tools or any tricks that you consider to be indispensable?

Lackey: Whiteboard?

Maria: The whiteboard. (All laugh)

Lackey: One thing I picked up from a colleague in (*my last university in Korea*), which I really liked for these university classes - you know, 30 sizes - when we are using a book or using something together, to have a scan of it up on the board - up on the whiteboard or up on the screen - so that students can see exactly where I'm referring to – that's quite handy. I never used to be into technology in the classroom, other than having an OHP - or an OHT, I guess it was, wasn't it? - and a tape player. But now, having a laptop and having the book or the material kind of pre-scanned and ready to show, having the listening scripts - I can press play - or the DVDs on the computer, so everything's kind of there, that I can use, but I don't think that's what you're really looking for, You're more like groups, especially in Korea - groups and group responsibility I think so you're in a group - having the group responsible together so you can put stronger and weaker students together, the stronger ones have to help the weaker ones rather than just ignoring them because they know their score depends on everyone doing well. I find it worked very well in (*my last university*), where I had students who were very individual and those who were from different majors and they didn't really want to talk to the others: by putting them into groups, they got to know people from different majors, which they really appreciated, because they couldn't get any of that in any other class. And they would each be responsible for each other's grade so, however the group performed, that's the grade

they would get -- they would all get the same grade depending on how they performed as a group. So, it made them practice a lot - but particular tricks? I mean, classroom techniques? Is that what you're after?

Maria: I'm leaving it free to you to decide where you want to go with this.

Lackey: You're leaving it free. No, I don't think there's anything special. I mean I know there's things I don't do, like I'm not good with using songs in class, that's just not my thing – poetry – I've done it, but it's not something I do very much of. (pause) I like having students running around – competition, but not too crazy competition, running dictations I enjoy, I've started having students doing podcasts.

Maria: Oh cool.

Lackey: Which has been fairly successful - first semester I've tried it. It just gives the students extra speaking opportunities outside the classroom and it's free - doesn't cost them, doesn't cost me anything, just time. That's been nice. Project work is good - students – again, it's group work, and the students get a lot of – they kind of see a benefit of it, working to get there. And there's so many, so many different skills they can use, not just learning English skills, but just kind of life skills that you know, high school students need - they've only studied for the last ten years or whatever, you know they don't have a lot of life skills.

Maria: Related to this you were mentioning that in (*your previous workplace*), you would pair stronger students and weaker students together. Were your students level-placed?

Lackey: They were.

Maria: Okay. Yeah.

Lackey: But there was still a fairly big range. I mean we had three levels and I mean it was conversation class but we weren't allowed to have a speaking element in the placement test, which didn't make a lot of sense to me, but you know, it's logistics, you do what you can. So we designed a test for other skills, vocabulary, grammar, reading, not writing, listening, and yeah, we just had to kind of hope that those skills would reflect their productive skills and, on the whole, it was a fairly good test for the program that we had. We did tend to have three fairly distinct levels. After - I think after fourth year or so - the students cottoned on and some of the better students would start appearing in the lower level classes because they knew they could get As if they were in the lower level classes but yeah. That's just one of those things.

Maria: Yeah. Okay. What do you remember about your own school days? Who were the teachers who influenced you most when you were in school, and why?

Lackey: What I mean - teacher I remember really enjoying his classes - was probably my Business Studies teacher and he was super-organised, super-knowledgeable and just really, really helpful. He'd get us to do targeted practice for our A level tests you know, writing practice essays and things, and he'd mark them, he'd have them back to us pretty much immediately. He was just so on to it, and really focused on helping us. So that was pretty key. My Politics teacher was also really into his subject, you know. He used to really enjoy talking politics and we'd find it very - if we didn't want to study that day, we'd find it very easy to distract him and take him off on a tangent – still politics-related but not on the curriculum or current-affairs kind of politics. I mean this was around the time that Thatcher was resigning and John Major was coming in, and Reagan was out and Bush was in – the first one – so it was and the Wall was coming down in Germany you know there was a lot of things going on

around that time, politics-wise which was interesting. Who else? There were, I mean there were teachers who scared me, you know (laughs)

Maria: Well, they did still make an impression.

Lackey: And they did make an impression, absolutely! My gym teacher was just horrible, and shouldn't really have been in a school, and I remember my French teacher was just awful as well - he would just ridicule any student that had trouble learning French and I certainly wasn't a- and I'm still not - a strong language learner, so that I mean, I don't remember a lot of French – so that's why I married someone who's fluent in French (laughs), to get around that problem (laughs) but yeah, he made an impression, for sure.

Maria: Why did your gym teacher make such an impression?

Lackey: He was just mean. He was just an incredibly mean person.

Maria: All right. How have your ideas about teaching changed over time and from country to country?

Lackey: Oh I think - I mean, I said one thing like with the whole using the first language – I'm okay with that although it's kind of an unwritten policy in (*my current*) University that our students speak in English all the time in class. I'm more relaxed about it, I won't enforce it, you know, too strongly, I won't dock points or anything like that. I might tell students I'm docking points, but (pause) but norm- I mean, I guess my principles are kind of so flexible that that hasn't changed so much. I mean being prepared for a class, being ready to teach them, being focused on the class, that kind of thing hasn't changed, it's more the content and the style of teaching that's changed. I suppose I mean going from (*the Czech Republic*) and New Zealand - classes of 12, 10 to 12, you know, seeing them every day for three months at a stretch, sometimes having students coming in for a week and then going out and then you know - that's a very different style of teaching to here where you know you're seeing students for the equivalent - I think the equivalent of one week at a language school you know, that thirty odd hours is all you're seeing them for, and having you know 30 to 40 odd students in a classroom it's just - it is a wholly different teaching style but I've definitely tried to keep as many things like the individual element and the fun you know in the classroom. And I think a lot of the feedback I would get would be, "it didn't feel like we were in class, it felt like it was just enjoyable and we were learning English at the same time. And I guess that hasn't changed. Hope you can get something from these rambling answers.

Maria: (laughs) I'm sure I can. This is the very last section, we're almost done.

Lackey: Oh really? Okay. Wow.

Maria: Only a couple more questions left. And this is about living in another country. Okay. What, to you, is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country? And I guess this would be targeted more at your time in the Czech Republic and in Korea but possibly New Zealand as well.

Lackey: No, New Zealand's - you know a lot of people are like well, it's an Anglo-Saxon country it must be the same... but it's not. It has a culture all of its own and you still need to learn their culture and it has all the pitfalls you know - not as many, I mean Korea and let's say Western countries are probably furthest apart in terms of – what, the Hofstede kind of scale of culture. ...What was the most challenging thing? I don't know. Learning, learning about the culture, learning about what's the things that are different the things that might give offence, the things that kind of try get in tune with things that work with students, cultural references you know

important people, famous people, some of the history you know learning about that is challenging. I mean the day to day life stuff I don't find so much challenging as interesting - I enjoy the fact that it's, you know, going to a store and buying a, you know, 200 pounds of ham is a challenge – it's difficult, it's not like going to a – going to Tesco's in the UK it's you know you have to figure out how to ask for it, and you have to make an effort and think about it, and that's nice, I like that, life doesn't become a drag, it's not being stuck in a rut and doing the same thing but probably the challenge is just yeah learning the cultural differences, crossing the cultural divide and trying to accept that what has worked in one country won't work in another. I think I remember my first class at (*my previous job*), I mean it was tricky because what I had designed was too high a level for the students. I was thinking, “ah university, they must be good,” and it just, ... their expectation was they would sit, I would talk and teach, and they would learn –my class was, you know, they had partners and they had to run from one end of the room to the other end of the room and tell each other clues and things to make this, put this picture together, this text together it was kind of a running dictation, and they were like, what do we do and I was confused about what do you mean, what do you do, you've been learning English for the last ten years, surely you've been doing this, haven't you? So that's the challenge, I think, is learning that culture and learning how to deal with that culture in the best way for the students so that you can get them or you can be on the same level as them. In terms of living in the country, probably the most challenging thing for me is learning to ask for help - not always good at that. And when you need to do something that's difficult, and you haven't got the language for it, you've got to ask somebody even though it might be fairly easy for them it's just a case of swallowing some pride and saying please help, I can't do this.

Maria: Yeah. How in your opinion, has living and working in another country changed you? You mentioned swallowing your pride...

Lackey: Oh sure, a lot actually I mean British people are not the most outward looking all embracing of foreign cultures. I mean, I often think that the UK and Korea are very, very similar in their xenophobia, I think. But yeah, I mean, travel broadens the mind, and it's definitely broadened mine. I mean, the first, I think one of the problems when we first came here was we were just a little too green and Korea was so different for us that it was just too strange and too difficult for us to cope with. But, having travelled more, and age as well, you know, it's become more accepting. I think we've become more accepting of different cultures and different ways of doing things - which is good, which I'm happy with.

Maria: Okay. Do you speak Korean?

Lackey: No. And, I mean, yes, I'm fluent for my level. (laughs) but, no, I mean I would definitely say beginner, maybe post-beginner.

Maria: Did you take classes?

Lackey: I've taken one class this semester, which lasted a month and a half but yeah, I there was nothing offered at (*my last workplace*), and I think I can make many excuses – we're a family of four, we speak English to each other and family comes first. We've got to look after the boys and make sure they're okay and so you know going and hanging out at pubs and meeting people and learning Korean that way just hasn't happened for me. I'm keen to learn - we're doing a course, we're starting another course at the local community centre next week, so I'm definitely keen to learn, but, like I said before, I'm not a strong language learner, Jane is definitely a good language learner (pause) and I think it's important, I think it's important to

have language. We're also so temporary, I think you know, we're always kind of like ah one more year one more year, it's not worth investing in that, we might be out of here – so that's another reason but...

Maria: Fair enough. Now how important do you think it for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country...

Lackey: (*interrupts*) I think it's really important. I mean there was a guy I used to work with in New Zealand, who's now working in Japan, he's published some books in Japanese, and he would always say you know you're not a good teacher until you can speak the language of the country you're working in. And I agree to a certain extent because I think like I was saying, you try and bridge that cultural gap and language is obviously an important part of the culture. My only consolation in that is, that being a bad language learner and feeling how I feel when I'm trying to learn the language or trying to communicate, helps me understand and respect my students a lot more - for the effort they're making. So, when a student is doing really well and is making some leaps and bounds, I know how much that has taken and I can still appreciate that every single day, whereas I think if I knew the language really well, I might be a little bit more like -- after knowing the language well for a while, I might forget the struggle of learning that language and it might take me further away from my students in a way. I don't know if that's an excuse or-- whether that's true – I won't know until I learn Korean properly – or another language properly. But that's my feeling.

Maria: Okay. And the last question,

Lackey: Really? Wow.

Maria: How would you describe your ethnic background? This is unrelated to teaching.

Lackey: Oh, ethnic background. (pause) what does that mean, I don't know - I'm British that's the answer I guess, I think I'm British.

Maria: Well, thank you very much!

Lackey: Yeah, you're very welcome, that was a lot faster than I thought it would be.

Maria: (laughs) And hopefully less painful as well!

Lackey: Oh sure!

Appendix E7: Simon's answers to the questionnaire

Age	40-44
Gender	Male
Nationality	Canadian
Ethnic background (self-description)	Scots / Irish Canadian
Current country/workplace	Other (please specify) Japan
Length of time in that country	15 years
Plans to stay in that country for	Indefinitely
Current ELT workplace	In a university
Length of time at current workplace	1-2 years
Like best about current workplace	relations with work colleagues
Undergrad degree in	Biochemistry
Formal teaching qualifications	a TEFL / TESL certificate course a Bachelor of Education degree a Master of Education degree MA in Applied Linguistics
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at elementary school. Yes, at secondary school. Yes, at university.
How studied	A mix of the above
Teaching	Yes
Previous teaching workplaces	Turkey 2 years - needed a change of lifestyle Canada - 5 years - moved for family reasons
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	3
First language	English
Languages spoken	3
Proficiency in languages spoken	English- native speaker Japanese - fluent speaking, elementary reading French- intermediate but rusty in all skills Turkish - basic
When started language learning	5
Native language of country where they work	Yes, fluently.
Student of native language	Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past.
A good teacher is	inspiring and challenging. He/she understand what the students can do and expects just a little bit more than

	that.
A good student is	Looking for more than they have now. He/she is reaching to find something new in their life.
Easiest way to learn another language is	Combine hard work in the classroom with real life experience and extensive exposure.
Best thing about working overseas	Independence in how my classes are run.
Best thing about living overseas	My family is here.
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	Understanding the web of relationships and power structures that influence my position.
Miss most about home country	People, friends, family, clothes that fit :)
How has living and working in another country changed you?	More open minded. Better able to see how deep culture influences actions and attitudes.

Appendix E7: Transcript of the interview with Simon

Note: Workplace and city names have been removed or changed to a description, in order to help maintain Simon's privacy.

Maria: This is an interview with Simon in Japan on the 24th of July, 2011. Simon, do I have your permission to record this interview?

Simon: Yes you do

Maria: Okay thank you. All right, so first up could you tell me a little bit about your background? And I mean your entire background from birth onwards.

Simon: Okay. I was born in Canada in a small town on the east coast. A small town that has three, no these days, maybe four thousand permanent residents and another six thousand university students who show up on campus for eight months of the year. So - small town - very small town - we didn't even live in the town - I lived on a dirt road. A big yellow school bus came to pick me up every day - and that kind of lifestyle. I lived there till I was about seven, eight maybe - I don't know, lost track - and then we moved into the city, which was, by Canadian standards, a medium size city. It was the capital of our province, so it was big city life - that kind of thing. I went to elementary school, junior high school, high school there - went to university there. Do you want more detail than that about early stuff or?

Maria: Your choice.

Simon: Okay. Let's see. Well, I guess, since I know you're interested in career things, I should say that I was pretty much always certain that I was going to be a teacher. From very early on - there was a brief time when I considered a career in chemistry, cos that was my major in university - but it became very clear early on in that career path that, temperamentally, that I wasn't suited to actually doing science, as much as I was suited to teaching about science. I started my career as a high school science teacher, actually - I taught Chemistry, Biology, a bit of Physics - even though I hated Physics - it was one of those 'I have to study the night before I teach it' kind of jobs for the Physics classes. Yeah, I started fairly early - in Canada Education majors tend to be a little bit older than everyone else because it's - at least, it used to be - the system has changed a little bit now, but when I was young, Education was always a second degree - it was something you did after you got your qualification in whatever your major was. So I finished my degree in Biochemistry and I went to a different university again to study Education. But most people don't do that directly - it's something you graduate, work for a few years and go back to - it's a very common pattern. So I was actually six or seven years younger than the average age of my classmates - I was 20 when I finished my Education degree, which is young. So I went there directly - and, also, I started elementary school a year early, so I finished high school a year early, and then I felt a little young when I was literally three years older than the kids in my class when I was teaching high school, so that was a little weird.

Maria: Did you like teaching high school?

Simon : Yes, yes. I did not like teaching junior high school - I found it a very difficult age to work with. Actually, my first teaching job, I was working at a joint school where they had junior high school and high school together, so I had some classes in the junior high school and some classes in the high school, and it was very clear to me that I interacted better with students the older they got. The younger students, especially the first year of junior high school, I had a lot of trouble dealing

with them - not in terms of discipline problems or that sort of thing, but in terms of understanding how to communicate with them.

Maria: They're how old - they're like 12, 13 at that stage?

Simon: 12 or 13 yeah. And I just found it very very challenging.

Maria: So how long have you been teaching EFL?

Simon: Well, in a way, since the very beginning, because, like I said, I was younger than everyone else so I figured, before I start my real career, so to speak, I have a few years to play with. So I looked around for some exciting option and I found English Immersion schools in Turkey. So I took a job at a school - I was still teaching Chemistry, Biology, Physics, but I was working in immersion with Turkish students who were doing high school in English, so that just really got me interested in the whole language learning thing.

Maria: How long did you work in Turkey for?

Simon: Two years.

Maria: Two years. Did you come to Japan after that?

Simon: Not directly, I went home for a year, but I just found I was really interested in the whole idea of how languages are, what's really going on with languages. And also, I was still young, so I thought 'oh I have another couple of years to play with. I kind of planned to go home and start my real career when I hit the average age of my classmates from when I graduated from Education, which was 28, I think. So I thought 'oh I'll go home and start my career when I'm 28.' So I went to Turkey for two years and went back to Canada for a year, and then I started to hear stories about Japan from friends of mine that had gone and taught there for a couple of years and I thought 'well, that's not a bad place to spend two years,' so I looked around for - what some options were and a friend introduced me to this one company that was placing teachers so I thought 'oh, okay,' and I interviewed with them and got a job and came to Japan thinking I would be here for two years and that didn't work out obviously (laughs) - I've been here for a long time since then.

Maria: How long have you been in Japan for, now?

Simon: The first time I stayed for five years and then I went home for three and then I've been here - this is my eleventh year back here now.

Maria: Why did you go back to Canada and why did you come back?

Simon: Well, that gets a little complicated. The reason I went back is that the company I was working for here in Japan opened an office in my home town and they asked me to go back and manage it and I had actually -- I'm jumping ahead. While I was working here in Japan, I got moved into the office and I wasn't teaching anymore and I was working as a manager, administrator, and a teacher trainer and, from there, when they opened the new office in my hometown, they asked me to go manage the office there, so I went home to do that. I did that for three years but I found that my job was shifting further and further and further away from Education - for about five years in the middle of that, I was teaching but I felt like a part-time teacher: I had like one class that I sort of took care of, and the rest of my day was administrative, sales, management. And, for the last year, I was regional manager for a half a dozen schools and it was -- it was problematic. There were lots of control issues. There were lots of- it was a Japanese company that was run in a very particular sort of Japanese businessman kind of way, but everyone who worked for the company was Canadian, and not just Canadian, but Canadian EFL teachers or

ESL teachers, who tend to be (pause) what's the word? Tend to be hippie-ish. Tend to be a bit sort of free and loose. And they chose this career path because they were interested in internationalization and international, cultural sharing and those kinds of things. But then they were working for a company that was very focused on the bottom line. So there was a lot of staff - I wouldn't call it problems, but a lot of communication issues, and a lot of staff and company not sharing a common goal, and a lot of that kind of stuff - and I found it very stressful - didn't enjoy it. And I kept finding that every time I got promoted, I was actually going further and further and further away from what I wanted to be doing. So I was sort of looking for a way to get out - I felt almost trapped in a cycle where, every time I got unhappy with my job, the company gave me a new job to do, which I found challenging and interesting for a little while but very quickly realized, 'okay, this is also not what I want to do this is not...' So I was getting rewarded for things by being given more to do and just not enjoying that cycle. And it was at that time that I met the woman who is now my wife - she worked for the same company and she was transferred over from head office to work with me at the branch in Canada, and we worked together for a couple of years. She decided to come home - she's from (*this town*), so I followed her - she calls me her international stalker. She left, and about six months later, I came here and I gave up that sort of whole business aspect of life and just said, "I'm going back to the classroom." So I took a really bad job teaching for a private language school in a dingy little office that was just horrible - but it was the kind of job I could do without putting much into it, so it paid the bills while I was in graduate school and actually gave me enough time to focus on graduate school. Because, even though I was working a full regular - it's not 9-5 but 12-9 is the standard schedule, but it was a regular nine hour a day, but intellectually, what I was doing was not at all challenging so I had the -what do you want to call it?- the mental wherewithal to do grad school.

Maria: What were you doing in grad school?

Simon: I did, simultaneously, Education and Linguistics. Two MAs.

Maria: Okay, since we have been talking about EFL and countries you've been working in let's stick with this theme for a bit. **Which country or workplace was the most memorable and why?**

Simon: Memorable. In a good way?

Maria: In any way.

Simon: Okay. I think the worst - the workplace that had the biggest impact on how I do my job now was actually when I was out of the classroom in that five year stint as a *salaryman*, as they say here. I think that five years changed how I look at my own work in that I (pause) - I don't know how to describe it exactly - I worked ten to twelve hours a day, six days a week, for five years, and it sort of changed my image of what can be done and how things can work and how things can be done. And it really gave me a new sense of logistics and planning and organisation and those are the things that I'm still using now, and still looking at - you know, how quickly work can get done, what needs to be done and, you know, A needs to be done before B can happen and that sort of planning of things. And I noticed that it really changed - I think changed the way I interact with students as well, because I think I have a better -after that experience, I think I have a better understanding of (sigh, pause) I'm not sure I understand the students better because of that, but I think I understand process planning better. So I think I understand better how to look at what I think the students should be able to do amongst them now, and how to put the stages of that

together in my mind. So that experience really, on a practical level, really helped me a lot. Towards the end I hated it, and it was gone three or four years before I looked at – after I left that job - before I could look back at it and realize I do teach very differently now after that, because I used to be much more of a day-by-day teacher, and I think that experience of working in a business with short term, midterm, and long term goals and all of that sort of business -operational planning - really helped me focus more on the long term planning for students.

Maria: Okay. Well, so that's one of the ways in which you think your ideas about teaching have changed? Do you think your ideas about teaching have changed from country to country? Like from when you worked in Turkey, when you worked in Canada, and when you worked here?

Simon: (pause) It's really hard to say if it was country to country or just as I got older. And also I think I was in a very different context when I worked in (pause) say, for example, Turkey or when I was working in Canada – as a high school teacher with a government approved curriculum, there wasn't a lot of thinking about what I needed to do next, or where I was going to take students, or what I wanted students to do, because a lot of that was laid out for me. I mean, I wanted students to be able to do this and this and this, but I wasn't making those decisions, I was - I was figuring out how to get that done on a day-to-day basis but I wasn't – I wasn't thinking about what students ought to do or ought to be able to do, whereas here... We actually don't you know have a curriculum at all, I mean it's probably the same as you, we have a lot of ... Our curriculum is – the polite word for it is emergent. The not-so-polite word for it is non-existent. We're given very very broad guidelines –what the expectations for student performance are, and then we're sort of expected to fill it in.

Maria: Okay. Do your students have to study English compulsorily here?

Simon: Yes.

Maria: Okay. For how long?

Simon: They have compulsory English classes in first and second year. In first year I think they have compulsory – seven 90 minute classes per week in English, and then in second year, no given class is compulsory, but they have to take five ninety-minute classes a week, just that level there.

Maria: Five electives or five – any five classes that you choose to enter on a particular day?

Simon: Electives. Electives. There's a set of 11 they can choose from, and they have to take five of them.

Maria: What do you teach – what year do you teach, the first year students? Second year students?

Simon: Both. Oh, and third year.

Maria: Third year? What's third year?

Simon: Third year's completely elective and the only course that's available is Business English, which I've been teaching for four or five months now. They put me in charge of Business English because I used to be a businessman, in those air quotes, so they, they gave it to me.

Maria: It sounds very similar to what we have in Korea, it's the same – the students have to study English compulsorily for two years though, and then the third year is Business English.

Simon: One exciting thing that I'm really happy about here is that we have some classes that are taught in English that aren't language program.

Maria: Really?

Simon: We have some classes – we have Economics, Development Studies, Peace Studies, that are being taught in English, so we're actually teaching English for Academic Purposes to get those students ready for those classes. So it's nice to have a clear goal, it's nice to know exactly - okay, I know what you're going to need this for in two years, so I can get you ready for that now. It's very nice.

Maria: All right. What teaching tools or tricks do you consider to be indispensable?

Simon: Indispensable? Oh. (Pause) Let's see. A lot of that's context-dependent, but what would I say is indispensable across any context would be... (pause) humour is indispensable. I think I couldn't get through a class without making a couple of jokes, the cheesier the better (laughs). I don't know if it's a trick or a technique but I think it's indispensable to know exactly what your students are capable of, and then set the bar a little higher than that. I think that's really really important, and I see a lot of classes - even some classes at the school that, in my opinion, the bar is set way too low, and the students begin to see the class as a hoop they have to jump through, and they know – they don't try, they don't really do anything, because they know they don't have to do anything to get through the class. It doesn't challenge them. So I think an appropriate level of challenge is important. I've been struggling with that for a couple of years actually, since I came to this school three years ago. I actually started out under-estimating what my first year students were capable of, and I was always scrambling to find new challenges for them, because they were accomplishing what I had set out – I don't want to say too easily, but it was obvious that I hadn't challenged them in any way, it was obviously that they weren't stretching at all. And only in the last year - and this is the third time I've been going through these first year classes – only this semester have I started to feel like I know where I should be aiming the class. For our intake of first year students, our students here are actually, what can I say? Better is sort of a loaded term, but better than we expected them to be. We started here with a certain image of what the student body was going to look like, and it turned out we were just wrong, and that they were actually a lot more committed and challenged - willing to challenge themselves to themselves - than we thought they were, and it took – I don't know about anyone else but it took me a while to realize what the students were capable of. I remember the first year I came here, it was about two-thirds of the way through first semester and I had run through all of my 'students will be able to' tasks for the entire year. And I sort of glided through the semester and then, during summer vacation, I had to sort of completely re-work what I was planning to do for second semester. And then, based on that experience, the second time through that course I went in with a completely different set of materials, but found the same thing happened. So, again, last year I completely re-designed the course, and finally, I think I've got it right. The class is difficult enough to provide a challenge but it's not crushing anybody so, maybe that's indispensable, figuring out where to put the bar. I'm not sure you'd count that as a technique but...

Maria: It counts. What teaching principles underpin your teaching? And, have these changed?

Simon: I think they've changed, yeah. I used to be a much more teacher-fronted person. Especially starting my career as a high school teacher in a content-heavy subject. It's not – you know, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, these are not things that

are open to interpretation. You know there is a right answer - for almost everything at the high school level anyway. So, I had sort of started my career as a - what can I say? – narrower, focus on the content, more of a transmission model of teaching, and when I switched from teaching content to teaching language, I found I was still doing that, I was still focusing on transmission. But, over time I realized that that wasn't working and it wasn't doing me any good and it wasn't doing the students any good and I worked on some other options for how things could happen. Actually I remember a book, I've forgotten the title now, I think it was written by Richards⁴⁹ - each chapter was a description going through history of all the different methods that people have used – do you know the book I mean?

Maria: Oh, okay, yes, yes, I do know the one you mean.

Simon: I got a copy of that book and I went through it and I thought, okay, some of these are forty years old but still there might be something in there. So I went through a period of about six months where I taught for a month at a time in each of these ways – or, at least, as I understood them from reading this book – and I tried the Silent Method with some of my classes for a month, and I tried some elements of Suggestopedia with some of my classes for a month, and I sort of looked at what I could cherry pick from each of these things and what worked for me and what didn't work for me, and what worked for that student but didn't work for that student, and tried to round out my bag of tricks, so to speak, with a bit of this and a bit of that – if it's this kind of student well then some aspects of that whole sort of audiolingual way will appeal to a certain learner, but you know – reject that, and another student. I found that very few students appreciated Suggestopedia (laughs) – a lot of them just kind of looked at me like “what are you doing? Why are you playing the music and turning off the lights?” So that was the only one that I didn't actually pull very much out of cos I just- I think the students could sense that I wasn't very comfortable with it, and then that made them not very comfortable with it. But through that half year of exploring the methods, I sort of moved away from that teacher-fronted thing. I'm not sure that, as your question said from country to country, I'm not sure that that was a country to country thing so much as it was ...

Maria: Over time?

Simon: Over time and an age thing and just experience.

Maria: Yeah, okay. How would you describe your teaching self?

Simon: Oh dear. (pause) Once a semester we give students a survey about the class, you know, an anonymous – there's little, you know, 1-5 agree disagree scale and then a place for free comments, and I would say 90% of the comments I get say the same thing, which is something I'm always happy to hear, and it's, “this class was really hard, and there was too much homework, but it was worth doing.” And that's – I guess that's what I'm looking for – I think that's what I want – that's what I want the students to think about me – that, you know, class was really hard, but they got something out of it or class – there was too much work to do, but when they got the end, they were better than they were before or, I – that seems to be more focused on the students than it is on me as a teaching self, but that's sort of what I want the students to see when they look at me, when they look at my class.

⁴⁹ Richards, J. & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maria: So I mean you could describe yourself as caring about the students, caring enough to push the students. Would you say that?

Simon: Yeah, I mean, I do care about the students but (pause) I don't know how to express this exactly but, I mean my job is as an educator. So my job is not to care about the students as –this is going to sound horrible, but my job is not to care about the students as people – my job is to care about the students' intellectual development, and, to some extent, their emotional and social development as well. But I really see myself as being one of many guides in their education, not in their life or not in their maturity or – I know a lot of teachers who really focus on the relationship with students in terms of the students' social development or emotional development or the students' you know, personal issues or whatever, but - I don't want to say I cut myself off from that, but that's not something that I focus on cos I really think my job is to help the students develop their language and intellectual skills. So in that - I'm sorry, I've forgotten the question (laughs).

Maria: It was – how would you describe your teaching self?

Simon: Right. So my teaching self is (pause) very focused on that sort of language and intellectual development of the students and very focused on - actually I don't think I push students, I think I pull them – I think I set out a challenge and I think I show students where the bar is, and I invite them to step across the bar. And I'm very happy when they follow me, I'm very happy when I have figured out where that bar can go - there's nothing worse than setting the bar too high, and just having students (*smacks one hand into the other*) hit a wall. And it becomes very frustrating for them and me and then when I lower the bar it becomes very evident that there's a sense of failure in the room and it's just a horrible feeling. But on the other hand, when I've set the bar just right, and it's just hard enough that it takes some effort to step across the bar, but there's a real sense of accomplishment and I think that's where I see myself – is in figuring out where that bar can go. I think that's the most important thing I do as a teacher. More important than all the tricks and techniques I use to help the students, I think the most important job I can do is figure how much to ask them to step.

Maria: Yeah. What do you remember of your own school days? Who was, or who were, the teachers who influenced you the most when you were in school?

Simon: I don't remember very much about my young school –actually, funny story – I'm allergic to (*a particular type of food*). They affect me mentally – I get blurred vision, ringing in my ears, and sort of that - you know that unfocused feeling you get when you have the flu? That's what it's like. I didn't find out I was allergic to (*this food*) until I was 13. So, for most of my childhood, I had that unfocused feeling that you get when you have the flu – except it was just every day, and I thought it was normal. So I just thought I wasn't terribly bright (laughs) but when I stopped eating (*that food*), suddenly I could see, I could hear, I could think, I could do all those things. So I have very few memories of school as a child. Junior high school, and high school I remember more – actually, the one teacher that I remember most was a high school history teacher, of all things – cos I find it funny that I remember a history teacher rather than any of my Chemistry teachers –but my history teacher was (pause) interesting and he was funny and he challenged us, he didn't let us get away with just remembering what we had learned, there was always, there was always a push to do something else. I remember a very interesting Math teacher I had –

Maria: For the same reasons as the history teacher?

Simon: Yeah, yeah. What else do I remember about my own schooling? I remember being very frustrated by what I was studying in Education when I was 20 - even as a 20 year old, I knew that what they were teaching me in these classes, called things like Principles and Practices of Education and Practical Psychology for Education and those kinds of classes, I knew that it wasn't going to do me any good, and I knew that - maybe it's just the school I went to wasn't very good - I don't know - but, when I did my practice teaching, and what I learned in the classroom, studying Education, there was a disconnect - there was a real sense that the classroom learning about education was not meant to prepare me to be a teacher. Yeah, it was more a case of learning about education, rather than learning how to educate. And I remember being very frustrated by that. I found it very frustrating. What else do I remember? I don't have very many distinct memories educationally of my first undergraduate degree in Biochemistry, I just found it - I was going through motions a lot, I was learning things and I was interested, engaged in classes and that stuff but nothing really jumps out as being significant for me.

Maria: Okay. I'm going to go back a bit: we were talking about your background, I just want to make sure I've got this. So you grew up in the country, moved to the city, and then you did a degree in Biochemistry and followed it with a Bachelor's degree in Education and then you moved to Turkey after that and from Turkey you came back to Canada - was that when you went to graduate school?

Simon: No. I worked as a high school teacher, in Canada, but, even while I was working as a high school teacher, I was very interested in the experience I had in Turkey. Working in the immersion school really got me interested in language learning. But I never really considered - at that time I never really considered, that that was going to be a career for me, it was just more of a curiosity.

Maria: Why did you leave Turkey?

Simon: It's a very frustrating place to live. Yeah, I - it's a great place, I loved it, but it was making me a little crazy. I don't deal well with uncertainty - it's a personal flaw of mine - I've a very low tolerance for ambiguity. And Turkey is a very ambiguous society. Nothing happens on time, buses don't have a schedule, they leave when they're full, there's very clear - unclear power relationships between people. Basically everything about life in Turkey was very ambiguous, and, because of my own character, I just found that extremely frustrating. It was okay for the first six months or so, it was all new and exciting and interesting, and I was learning, but I stayed there for two years, which was maybe about 18 months too long (laughs). Also, I wasn't in the best work situation in the world - the school I was working for - the whole country has lots of English immersion high schools, they're a very popular option for middle class or upper class children - they're relatively expensive so they're not open to the general population but you'll find them all over Turkey. But my school had a very specialized target market. We were the only school in (*the city where I worked*) that didn't have an entrance exam. So we sort of specialised in students that had failed the entrance exam elsewhere, and we had a second intake of students at sort of the midway point of first semester, and that was a special intake for students that had been kicked out of better schools.

Maria: Okay.

Simon: So, we had discipline problems, we had low achieving students, we had - maybe if I had gone there when I was a bit more mature, I could have dealt with it better, but I was 21 and it was just very very frustrating.

Maria: So you went back to Canada.

Simon: I went back to Canada.

Maria: And then from Canada to Japan?

Simon: From Canada to Japan, working for a private language school chain – two years as a teacher and – I had planned on a two year contract and planned to go home, but then they offered me this administrator job, and I thought well, might be interesting and I stuck with that for five years, but was (pause) - I think I was so busy I didn't notice in the beginning - but it became more and more obvious that I was moving away from the classroom, which was where I wanted to be.

Maria: Do you think you will return to Canada at some stage now, or will you live in Japan?

Simon: I think I'm here permanently. You know – I applied for and I got my permanent status, I'm married, we bought a house, we just planted a tree – I have to take care of that, I can't leave now! Yeah, I don't think I'm – I don't think I'll be back to Canada for any sort of long term stay, I think I'm here fairly permanently. I go back, you know, regularly, for a week here, a week there – I'll be back for a month next year – in the winter I'll go back for a month, but I don't think I'll be back permanently. Actually my home in Canada has a long tradition of people going away. For a long long long time it was a very economically depressed area, so there's actually a cliché, or an idiom we use, we saying 'going down the road', which means you have to leave home to find a job.

Simon: We have this, we have this tradition – we say we're going down the road which means we're leaving to find work. And, for a long time the tradition was to go west, west or south, south to the United States or west to central Canada or to the, in more modern times, to the to the oil fields in the west. Actually there are whole towns in west Canada, whole oil towns, populated entirely by east coast people. There's no-one actually from the east coast in any of these towns. They're all just people who've gone down the road. So my family likes to say that I've just gone farther down the road than any of them did. There's actually no one from my family in my hometown anymore. We're all gone.

Maria: Just a few more questions to finish, and this one is about living and working in another country. What to you is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country? I mean you talked about this a little bit in connection to Turkey – would you like to talk about it in relation to Japan?

Simon: Sure. In Turkey, it was definitely the ambiguity of life. And I think the hardest thing for me was (pause) - obviously the language was difficult - but even after I had gotten to the point where I could communicate properly, it took me a long long time to really understand human relationships. And to really understand where I fit, in terms of what is my role in my wife's family, or what is my role as a member of this faculty, or what is my position? And it took me a long long time to really understand where I stand. And then after that it took me another long long time to move to the position I wanted to be. I'm not sure if it's similar to Korea or not, but Japan has a lot of temporary teaching positions, even at the university level, the vast majority of teaching positions are for Western faculty, for the quote unquote native speaker are non-tenure, non-faculty positions, it's a three year instructor's post, or it's a two year lecturer's post, or - tenure track or tenure positions or permanent faculty posts are few and far between, so I felt very lucky to be here, you know, cos we are, full faculty members here, and permanent. But, establishing that stability was

very important. That was my big ambition. It was the reason I went to graduate school. Well, not the entire reason, I mean I was intellectually interested in what was going on and I wanted to be a better teacher and I wanted to start becoming more of a researcher and I wanted to be - I wanted to be a professional and do what I do as well as I possibly can, but my primary motivation was to get out of that loop of uncertainty, to get away from the (*sigh*) the ambiguity of life, I guess, the uncertainty of the future. There was already enough uncertainty in my life because at that point I wasn't - like I talked about position and what my own position was - I didn't really understand the culture well enough to know what my position was, and didn't understand how secure my footing was. So I had very strong practical motivation to move to where I can have a stronger, more stable, more clear position in life. Actually I feel a little weird now because I've accomplished that - I mean that I feel like I've learned where I stand, culturally and socially and professionally and I've sort of - for about ten years I was working towards a certain goal and I got there - now I'm a bit at a loose ends about what I should do next. (laughs)

Maria: How in your opinion has living and working in another country changed you?

Simon: I don't think there's anything that hasn't changed. I mean, everything is different. (pause) I've learned a lot, I've seen things and done things and (pause) - that's a really hard question to answer because absolutely everything has changed. I know I'm more open-minded, I know I'm more flexible. I know I'm not very tolerant, but more tolerant of ambiguity than I used to be. I know that I'm more attuned to other people - I think I can read people better now, because I've learned to read three very different groups of people - I learned to read Canadians, I learned to read Turks, and now I've learned to read Japanese people. And I think I'm more attuned to people's body language, I'm more attuned to people's - how people position themselves and what it is they're doing. It doesn't mean I always read it correctly, but I feel like I'm better at it than if I hadn't left Canada. (pause) I think I might be a little bit more ambitious because I've left. I think, if I'd stayed in Canada, I would've been more of a - you know, get a job as a high school teacher, buy a house, build a white picket fence - and I probably never would've gone to graduate school. It's hard to say what I would and wouldn't have done, but I feel like living overseas has made me or helped me push myself more than I would have otherwise. Yeah.

Maria: Do you speak Japanese?

Simon: Yup.

Maria: And why did you choose to learn it?

Simon: Well, why? I know lots of people don't, but I never thought about it as an option, it just always seemed like self-evident that if you're living here, you should speak. I have fossilised a little bit - I think I've reached a certain point where, on a personal level I'm fine, professionally I still have trouble expressing myself nicely in meetings, and my reading and writing is not up to scratch - I mean, I read like a fifth grader and I have special software on my computer to read things out loud to me, because my listening is so much better than my reading. So, I I don't - t I don't want to say that I've mastered Japanese- or anything like that because I couldn't say that, but I've - I mean I speak Japanese at home, much of my social life happens in Japanese - depending it just (pause) - your question sort of implied a choice but I never felt like there was one. I mean, I know people who choose not to learn to speak Japanese but I actually don't understand them. I don't understand where that choice comes from or how they - how they feel like they are actually living here, you know.

When I was younger, when I was living in another city, before I met my wife - and I was you know 26, 27, I knew lots of people who didn't learn to speak Japanese, and I think there was a danger- a danger? there was a window of opportunity for me to fall into that lifestyle, of living in the foreigner bubble, , but actually getting that administrator's job sort of very quickly pulled me away from that, because, in that position, my entire life happened in Japanese, no one in my office spoke English to me and you know, other than when I had to manage the foreign staff, nothing I did happened in English. So it just seemed natural that I would have to learn.

Maria: How important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live?

Simon: For an EFL teacher? I think it's extremely important.

Maria: Why?

Simon: Well not to use it in class. I actually never speak Japanese to my students, except in very very extreme circumstances. I'm not completely against the use of L1 in the classroom and I will use it, but I prefer not to lean on it. And I think it can be helpful in some very particular senses but if it's used too much, it becomes a crutch, it becomes a shortcut for both me and the students – it starts to become a crutch for the students, and, rather than spending two minutes trying to communicate with me in English, and again, stepping across that bar I talked about earlier, then they'll just fall back on speaking to me in Japanese, and I don't think that's very helpful to them. So I don't use it in class, that's not why, but I think if I don't speak Japanese or you know Korean if I lived in Korea or Thai if I lived in Thailand, I think there's a whole set of things that I don't understand about my students and not only my students but also the people I work with, my colleagues. I think if I didn't speak Japanese, I don't think I would ever really be considered a member of the faculty, I don't think I'd ever really be considered a professional. Even now, I mean the way I speak Japanese is very casual, I learned - most of my spoken Japanese I learned from my in-laws, sitting around the kitchen table kind of thing, or from watching TV, which is not terribly professional. So even now, I don't think I'm fully considered a proper member of the faculty, because I don't express myself professionally in Japanese, and I do sense some issues there. But I'm not (pause) what can I say? – it hasn't reached the point where the motivation to be any better has kicked in. – I sense it at the edge of my consciousness but it's not knocking on my door, so to speak, so I have kind of fossilised, but without speaking Japanese, I just feel like I wouldn't be a member of the community that I'm working in. Even simple things like if I understand what my students are talking to each other about in the hallway, I have a better sense of how to interact with them in the classroom. If I can understand what questions the kids in the back row are asking each other about when I've just said, I understand more about how I have to teach the next day. Like – just simple things like if I know that three of the kids in the back row had to turn to their partner and ask, "What did he say was for homework?" then that's going to change how I assign homework in the future – just simple things like that. But without speaking Japanese, I just feel like my job would be so much harder.

Maria: One last question. How would you describe your ethnic background?

Simon: (pause) Technically, I'm half British. My father emigrated to Canada from Britain when he was young, and my mother's great grandmother was from Ireland and great grandfather was from Scotland, so I'm kind of a British Isles mutt, as they say, but I don't think of my ethnicity in those terms very much. If anything, I often think of myself as Irish, because that was sort of the culturally dominant factor of my

childhood, the east coast of Canada is very Scots Irish kind of mixture, my grandmother was very much in the Irish – she'd never actually been to Ireland but – have you ever heard the phrase there's no more Scots than the Scots abroad?

Maria: Yeah.

Simon: Yeah. That's the same for the Irish. So there was that that was happening in my childhood. I grew up with that kind of music, I grew up with the food, I grew up with the attitudes, so I sort of think of myself as either Scottish or Irish, even though I'm not. But, more than anything else, I think of myself as - I'm not sure this is an ethnicity or not, but I'm east coast Canadian. I mean, they have a certain view on life, I think we have that's different from other Canadians, I mean, when we... I don't know exactly where this comes from but, you know it's almost as if we've created our own little ethnic group, and it doesn't really matter where your parents come from, it doesn't matter, you know, if your parents are from the West Indies, or if your parents are from southern Europe, northern Europe, the British Isles, the people who grew up in Nova Scotia tend to all take on that sort of vaguely Scottish, Irish laid back, happy go lucky, drink too much and eat fried food kind of- kind of thing. I mean I have friends who are superficially ethnically very different from me, but we all grew up in the same place, and so I think, in terms of - I mean there's physical ethnicity, but then there's also cultural ethnicity and I think that the cultural ethnicity is something that everyone who grew up (*on the east coast*) shares, regardless of what their physical ethnicity is. So I think I'm pretty typical.

Maria: Okay, Thank you very much.

Simon: No problem.

Appendix E8: Zahava's answers to the questionnaire

Age	45-50
Gender	Female
Nationality	Canadian
Ethnic background (self-description)	Jewish
Current country/workplace	Japan
Length of time in that country	15 years
Plans to stay in that country for	forever
Current ELT workplace	In a university
Length of time at current workplace	1-2 years
Like best about current workplace	the students
Undergrad degree in	Communications and German
Formal teaching qualifications	a TEFL / TESL certificate course a Master of Education degree PhD Linguistics
Foreign language study in school	Yes, at elementary school. Yes, at secondary school. Yes, at university.
How studied	A mix of the above
Teaching	No
Previous teaching workplaces	Canada 4 years -- returned to Japan
Length of time spent teaching English	more than ten years
Countries taught in	2
First language	English
Languages spoken	3
Proficiency in languages spoken	English -- native speaker Japanese -- upper-intermediate French -- beginner German -- intermediate
When started language learning	5 -- French
Native language of country where they work	Yes, sufficiently well for day-to-day interactions
Student of native language	Not right now, but I have taken lessons in the past.
A good teacher is	creative fair adaptable able to challenge students
A good student is	motivated positive hard-working

Easiest way to learn another language is	Have friends who speak it.
Best thing about working overseas	I could get tenure sooner than I expected!
Best thing about living overseas	My income is sufficient to support my family.
Most challenging aspect of living and working overseas	It's hard to make friends.
Miss most about home country	It's easy to become friends and communicate with others.
How has living and working in another country changed you?	To be honest, I think I was sleepwalking through life before I came to Japan. I woke up and found I could create my own life in my own way. I can be myself in a way I can't really in my own country.

Appendix E8: Transcript of the interview with Zahava

Note: Workplace and city names have been removed or changed to a description, in order to help maintain Arielle's privacy. Zahava's husband is referred to as 'Toshio' in this transcript.

Maria: Hi Zahava. This is an interview with Zahava on the 24th of July 2011. Zahava, do I have your permission to record this interview?

Zahava: Yes you do.

Maria: Okay. Thank you very much.

Zahava: Do I get to choose a pseudonym?

Maria: Yes you do. What would you like?

Zahava: I would like to be Zahava. Z-A-H-A-V-A.

Maria: Okay.

Zahava: It's my favourite name.

Maria: No that's yours, all yours, nobody has asked for it yet.

Zahava: I'm sure no-one will.(laughs)

Maria: Okay. My first question is, could you tell me a little bit about your background? Not just teaching background, your entire background, birth onwards

Zahava: Oh really? Oh my god! That's a long story! Okay well I grew up in Canada. I guess I've always loved English - I was reading beyond my grade level and I was - on the standardised test, I was always scoring in the top band. I never knew I wanted to be an English teacher though till much later - that wasn't a - I thought I was going to be a journalist, I liked to write as well, and go to a university which had a school of journalism. But after high school, I was tired of seeing the same people, I didn't want to see them anymore, and most of the people who stayed in (*my town*) went to (*the local university*) so I went to (*a different university*) which was a bilingual university and we had to take a French proficiency test and I guess people wanted to avoid that so that's why they didn't go there. So I could kind of restart my life - I was painfully shy and I had been bullied in school and stuff and so I just wanted to start afresh you know. Anyway, I did a degree in Communications and German. One woman who really influenced my thinking about continuing education was - she was a lawyer, she gave a speech at the graduation in high school, and she said, "go to school, get a degree even if it doesn't have anything to do with what you're studying and then get another degree - find out what you want to do, take your time, there's no rush." And that was wonderful, because I felt like I had permission to enjoy studying, which I did. I found out -- I was put off on that in high school because people say you're a geek or a brainiac or whatever so I didn't want to stand out. And what I really liked about university was that suddenly it was okay to want to study, to want to learn, to want to be smart. Anyway, so I did the degree in communication and German and then I moved to (*another Canadian city*) - actually I was running away from a bad break up - I was heartbroken and I ran away to (*this city*) and I worked at a university: I was a temp and then finally I got a regular position. I was just, you know, an overeducated secretary.

And I was working in the graduate department in education as a secretary, and I looked at some of the thesis titles and I read through some of the theses and I thought, 'oh I can do that!' So then I went for career counselling and - when I was still living in (*my home town*) - I had forgotten all about it - but I had tutored some

mature students in English literature and they said to me, “You’ve explained it better than our professor.” And I thought, ‘wow that’s cool.’ And when I remembered that, you know, when I was doing all these skill and interest inventories, I thought, ‘oh, I want to be a teacher.’ And then, also, my cousin lives in (*Japan*), she’s been in Japan for about 20 years or longer - she said to me, “You should come to Japan, it’ll change your life.” So I thought, ‘okay, I’ll be an ESL teacher.’ I didn’t want to teach children, I didn’t want to go back to school and do a BA, so I did a TESL certificate at (*my workplace*) and I could do most of the classes - I did four of the five - for free because I was a union member. I was a part-time student so that was great. But then I still felt I wasn’t ready, and I was a bit scared of the real world, so I decided to go to grad school. I was working in the graduate office and I went to graduate school and I did an MA. I graduated - it was kind of ass-backwards when I think about it, because I had nothing to hang any of the theory on because I really, you know, I just had some experiences tutoring - I hadn’t done any classroom teaching.

And then, after I graduated, someone said, “Oh there’s a job in Japan.” And I had worked with the students because (*my workplace*) has a connection with (*a university in Japan*). (*The Japanese university*) started up a new program and they were sending about a hundred students to study for eight months, and they’d built a dormitory, and students complained they ended up - you know, they wanted to be integrated, not isolated. But, anyway, so as a graduate student in that program -and that’s when I first started meeting Japanese students, lots of them - and then - yeah after I graduated, I worked at (*the Canadian university*) - I did one summer intensive class and that was Japanese students. And I really enjoyed it. And it was at that time I realised that the teaching was like (pause) - it was like an amplifier for my personality and (pause) I could really be myself more. Like, I really enjoyed it - yeah, I really enjoyed it. It was helping me get over my shyness, and also it was fun and I was enjoying the way I was interacting and connecting with the students.

So then someone said, “Oh there’s a job in Japan.” So I applied for it. Because they had a relationship - although I wasn’t so experienced - because they had a relationship with (*my Canadian university*) they hired me at (*the Japanese university*). So then I came to Japan in (pause) 1993. And I had a three year contract - one year renewable, but I didn’t really like (*the Japanese university*) - I was green. I didn’t know what I was doing. I was shocked to encounter students who - the silence, the resistance was jarring. I was the first foreigner many of them had met back then - this was the early days of the JET program, so many of them had never met a foreigner, and when I would walk up to them in the class, their eyes would go wide and they’d sit back in their seats as far away from me as possible. And I thought, ‘oh god, I’m only 5’2”, how come ...? I’m not so scare- why are you scared of me?’ So that was - and I didn’t really make an effort to learn Japanese then - I was a bit pig-headed and so I attribute it - a lot of it was my fault too: I was just refusing to do anything to integrate and I just basically - it was like culture shock. And then I met Toshio - he was my student actually, in the adult night school (pause) and then, when we got together, life started to get better, because my comprehension got better. I had a cultural informant, I was in love (laughs). And then we decided to go back to Canada, because we were thinking about making the relationship permanent, but I wanted him to experience my culture as well before making any commitment.

So we went back to Canada for four years and I worked at (*a college in Canada*) and that was - sometimes it was a satisfying experience sometimes not. The work was - the students were interesting, it was, like, more immigrants, it wasn’t necessarily

university-bound students. It was people who were learning English to survive in Canada, and that was interesting, but the way they were doing the streaming was terrible. For example, the last time I taught there - and there were complaints by the students - not about me - they said, "Zahava's trying her best." But I had three levels of students in one class - you know, I had students who were quite fluent, and then I had students like Toshio who was in my class - he shouldn't have been in my class, his level was too low - he was like a beginner - and trying to find a balance was very hard. I had students getting angry in class, and it wasn't my fault - they had streamed it like that, what could I do? But then I met this woman - and I was doing a part-time gig at (*a university*) and she said, "Oh, you should try (*this other university*). (*It's*) really good." And so I applied, and I went for an interview, and they hired me as a teaching assistant just to make sure and when they came to observe my class they could see I could teach and then I worked there until I came back to Japan so I was there for about two years.

I did one year, someone left and they encouraged me to apply for a full time contract for one year - somebody was on maternity leave. So I got all my benefits, which was great, and my own office and everything - it was in an old house and it was in the garret (laughs). But I was telling you -- you know, it was at (*this university*) where I met that teacher who said to me, "This is what you should be doing." and I thought, 'okay.' You know, I had found my calling. I love teaching - I love what I do - I love preparing lessons, I love creating, I love interacting with the students - I'm not afraid to make mistakes. And I want to have fun - I want to challenge the students and I want to have fun and I guess maybe that's it.

The reason I'm here⁵⁰ - the reason I kept moving - was, I really really did like my job in (*the south of Japan*) that was, I was very happy I tried private teaching in (*a city*) when I first came back to Japan and I didn't like it because I felt - well, many reasons - the money wasn't very good - I couldn't charge a lot because I was in the country - and people didn't take it seriously - you know, I wasn't respected, I was just a housewife doing a part-time job in her house - that kind of thing, and people would just cancel at a moment's notice and not come or not want to pay, and I just I got depressed. I was really depressed and Toshio actually found me the job in (*the south of Japan*), so we lived separately for the first three years and I went, and I was so happy - you know, I had a nice office, the students were lovely, and I was a professor again. And that was really nice, and I would've stayed there -the salary wasn't great, I wasn't taking home much more than an ALT⁵¹, to be honest, but, as I was getting older, I realized that (pause) I couldn't stay at that low salary with my experience. And I was getting older, and if I wanted anything permanent, I'd have to go for the doctorate. And so I started the doctorate, and I really wasn't looking for work - I got this job sooner than I expected. I mean, I was in the doctorate, and I was close to finishing, but I thought I probably wouldn't get tenure until after I'd gotten the doctorate, but I got- I was lucky, it was just good timing. So we came here, and so I have this job for life if I want it. But yeah, so that's how I got here. (laughs)

Maria: Okay. And how would you describe your ethnic background?

Zahava: My ethnic background. I'm Jewish, by birth, by whatever - race I guess, I don't know - but as secular - my parents - they sent us to Jewish camp in the summer which was awful, it was a nightmare - they sent us to Jewish camp, but all I

⁵⁰ In her current workplace in Japan

⁵¹ Assistant language teacher

learnt was how to parrot some songs (laughs) so I don't really identify – I mean, I'm Jewish by culture. And there weren't really that many of us, I mean, I grew up in a pretty white WASP⁵² neighbourhood.

Maria: Okay. You said - I think you've answered this next question but I'll ask it anyway - why did you become a teacher? - You said something really cool actually, you said you felt you could be yourself more.

Zahava: YES, yes, yeah. I think, like many, I was shy, but I think I'm a frustrated actress as well, I think - typical you know, and I could, I'm not so good with the one-on-one, I wasn't very good at the teaching one student at a time thing, that was too much for me, but classroom teaching, I could do that..

Maria: It's kind of like a performance.

Zahava: Yes. Yes. And I enjoy it. I enjoy the energy exchange. Yeah.

Maria: Okay. How would you describe your teaching self and why?

Zahava: My teaching self? I need a prompt! (laughs)

Maria: Well it can be something as simple as a teacher, a professor, things like that, it can be in terms of your relationship with your students.

Zahava: Okay. I guess, I suppose facilitator would be the jargon, but that would probably be the closest thing. So, I like to set up a situation and let it run. I like to set up things and see what the students will do. I like to - I set it up very tightly because they like to know exactly what's expected of them, and I tell 'em how they're going to be scored and everything, and then I let it go. And they always amaze me. You know, I give them freedom and boundaries, and that seems to work perfectly. So I guess facilitator.

Maria: Yeah. Yeah. Are there any teaching tools or tricks that you consider to be indispensable? That you use again and again in class?

Zahava: Teaching tools or tricks? These days I - the tool, I don't know about tricks but tools - yeah, I upload videos from the internet and make comprehension questions and use them a lot. And I really like that because I can get contemporary topics. We're talking about a specific topic - I can find a video on it, I can make it, and then we can use it. I also use, I like to use media with students, I tell the class - I started teaching it when I was at the other university and then I did it last year in my project English class, it was Media English, so the students had to make a web page, they had to make a blog, they had to make a movie, they had to use MovieMaker and make a movie – they had to – well, for a while there was that free program with the little animated characters, you put dialogue in their mouth?⁵³

Maria: Oh yes, yeah, yeah.

Zahava: Well, it was free and then they started charging for it, I was really upset, cos my students did hilarious, laugh out loud scenarios - it was just a scream. So I like using technology, if it's free. I like using technology with the students.

Maria: Do you have access to a lot of technology in the classroom?

Zahava: We have labs. We have – now, with the new building, we have four labs, we have two in this building and we have two in the other building. So we have four labs. So that class, that media class, that was a 100 percent in the lab. So in any - in every classroom here, there's a projector and a screen and the plugs - like I have this

⁵² White Anglo Saxon Protestant

⁵³ xtranormal

groovy hookup thing and I hook up my iPod to it, and show a video or I have a little mini-

Maria: Do you have computers in the classroom?

Zahava: No. No. –I have my own that I bought with my research funds that you saw over there, so I have a little computer there, so I have, they have wireless on the campus, so I can show something.

Maria: How have your ideas about teaching changed over time or from like working in Canada to working in Japan?

Zahava: How have they changed? Well, I think, like any teacher, I think, at the beginning it was all about survival, and now I can leave - I can, I'm not afraid to not be prepared. So when I was first teaching, I would over-prepare like crazy, I was scared to death – I would have like, a month's worth of material in one class, because I was so – I didn't know how long anything would take and I would just be like, prepare too much. And now I can prepare, I can have a loose idea of what I want to do, I can be a lot more flexible now, I can create sometimes, I'll abandon an activity suddenly – if it's not working, I'll just say, "oh forget it, we're not doing this this is" – and I come up with an idea, I'll just say to myself, 'okay, you know, what can we do that's related?' and my brain will come up with something. So, I think, a lot less afraid - I don't have to plan so tightly as I used to, it's much quicker for me to plan.

Maria: What teaching principles underpin your teaching? And have these changed?

Zahava: Well. (pause) that's a tough one. Teaching principles. The students and I are at the same level. I don't teach down. They have something to tell me, and I want to know what it is. Learning should be fun. Learning should be enjoyable. Last night when we were out, (*my friend*) said, "Learning is pain." No, I disagree with that. It should be a challenge, but it should be fun. You know, you should feel your synapses firing in a pleasant way, making connections. (pause) And learning is for life. You know, you don't master anything, you can always improve.

Maria: Now what do you remember of your own schooldays? And who was, or who were the teachers who influenced you the most when you were in school?

Zahava: It's funny I was thinking about this because I'm thinking about - I like to think about my book that I'm writing, and dedicating it to two teachers in particular, from high school, who are English teachers. One of them, who taught me how to write, and I remember, she taught us – it was, 'how to wash an elephant' was the topic, and it was a three paragraph essay. Five paragraph essay. The Introduction, three body paragraphs, and the conclusion. And I'll never forget that, that was like a one-day lesson in high school that I'll never forget.

And the other was another English teacher who's inspired a lot of her former students and we're still friends and she just—we could feel the joy of English coming out of her, you know, she loved literature, she was passionate, and she was a passionate and fun teacher, she didn't hold back, she didn't (pause) - it was sexy - I can't think of a better word – she'd probably be surprised to hear me characterize it that way, but, yeah. And also, she let me colour outside the lines, and she liked my work -like when we were learning - it was Carpe Diem, and this is - she and I always were trading Carpe Diem and Seize the Day – when she taught us about Carpe Diem and we did these poems about - to all the young virgins and what not, and I wrote one from the girl's point of view, you know, for fun, and I gave it to her and she still – I don't know if she's teaching still, but even, like, right to the end of her career, she was giving it out to students.

Maria: Oh, that's so cool!

Zahava: Yeah! So, you know, to be encouraged, to have your writing praised by – and appreciated by a teacher and continued – like, I just dashed it off, I was just doing a parody, you know. And, you know, we're still friends and I still - she gave me a card thanking - when I got my doctorate, she sent me a card, or she gave me a card when I was in Canada telling me how proud she was of me, and I was so happy. So those – I think those two women really influenced me, yeah.

Maria: So, how long would you say you've been teaching EFL? Not ESL, EFL.

Zahava: EFL? Fourteen years, fifteen years. Fifteen years.

Maria: And ESL?

Zahava: ESL in Canada? Three years? Yeah.

Maria: Okay. Could you tell me about the places or environments that you've worked in? Especially in particular which one was the most memorable or – and why?

Zahava: Well, I guess it's here –would be – well, no, well, gosh, (pause) most memorable – they all had good points and bad points, they all had good points and bad points, so, for example, (*the college in Canada*), I liked the people I worked with, you know, I made friends with a lot of the teachers. But the pay wasn't very good, and, as I said, they didn't stream the students very well, they were just trying to make money - and then you weren't always guaranteed classes.

(*My last university job in Canada*) –we're mostly part-time and almost all the teachers were part-time and the salary was very good, but you were limited in the number of hours you could teach, it was all unionised, so the hourly wage was awesome but you could only work a maximum of twelve hours a week. Was it twelve? No, it was 9, there was like a 9-hour teacher in the intensive and a six-hour. I was one of the few people who didn't mind teaching credit courses – a lot of the other teachers just wanted to teach in the intensive, it was, you know, minimal prep, very little marking, and no grading and that's fine, that's fine too - a lot of people are good at that. I like teaching the higher level students, I liked, I always want the top class, and I want the most motivated, and the students who are planning to go to university. And my favourite thing to teach is writing.

Most memorable - well, (*my first university job in Japan*) I didn't like it, they treat the teachers like crap – it's famous but, it's not, it wasn't a good place- and I met Toshio there – I guess it was good, I got a husband out of it.

(*The university in the south of Japan*) I really liked, it was a beautiful place, I liked the students – that, I guess that was my favourite school – if I was kind of - actually when I applied for this job, I was kind of hoping they would say, “Oh Z, no, no, don't go - we'll give you tenure, please stay.” (laughs) And actually the Dean said, he said, “no, you'd better go,” he said – well, not in a mean way, he said, “we can't hire anyone” - they were just – as people were retiring they weren't replacing them – so I guess they're hurting a little bit so, and I mean that's a trend across Japan –the birthrate's falling and more of the universities are trying to cut back, or find ways to save money. That was my favourite school - I got along well– but then I didn't have to do an entrance exam, I wasn't - I didn't have any administrative duties at all, which I didn't like actually – a lot of my colleagues were happy because they didn't want to do those things but I wanted to be a little more integrated than- I wanted to know what was going on, and have some say. Although, the course- the courses were

set up really well – like, it was a good program, our English program was very strong, I think, it was, and it was excellent.

Maria: Were you only teaching Conversation? What subjects were you teaching?

Zahava: No. No, no. Actually more than here. I taught Writing, we did Extensive Reading the first year then we got- they got rid of that, we were doing Writing – we had three levels of Writing and I taught all of them – Basic Writing, Advanced Writing, which was essay writing, and Academic Writing. I taught an eight to ten page essay. I taught Debate, I taught Public Speaking (pause), yeah, all kinds of stuff, a whole range of stuff.

Maria: Were those all credit courses?

Zahava: Yeah, yeah yeah yeah. And I really liked it.

Maria: What do you teach over here?

Zahava: Well, I teach a- we have a Core English - it's a kind of a four skills course, and the textbook we use is Academic Connections, which is by ETS

Maria: The TOEIC people.

Zahava: The TOEIC people, the good people that bring you TOEIC and TOEFL. Because this school bases the students' scores on TOEIC. They use TOEIC as the placement test to stream the students, which I don't necessarily agree with.

Memorable. Well, yeah, I guess I would have to say the university in (*the south of Japan*). It was my favourite place. I liked the students. I liked walking through the small campus. I mean, here, I have the same experience – walk through the campus and say hello to students everywhere – hello hi hi hi – you know. And more students came to me there, they don't here so much – they would come and tell me their troubles.

Maria: Why do you think that is?

Zahava: I don't know why. Well, I was the only female, I was the only foreign female at the other university – so maybe they're going to my colleague, I don't know – she's a bit more of an earth mom than I am, so (laughs) they go to her.

Maria: Okay, so we've only got a couple of questions left to go. What to you is the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country?

Zahava: Probably language and culture. My Japanese ability is limited but it's not just that – I don't know how to work in the system. So, to make changes or to be heard, I don't know how to work the system, there are ways and you know, “you should talk to this person,” and “talk to this person”, I sort of have a cultural informant now – one of my colleagues – I talk to him a lot about testing, and my questions about things - and there is definitely the organisational structure – Japanese organisational structure is different and that's - I I have a lot of assumptions that I think a lot of my colleagues have – uh foreign colleagues – I think we all have, you know we're hired because we're experts, and we're hired for this and this is why students come to university and blah blah blah blah and not necessarily true. You know. Like they choose the school (pause) by its ranking and they get into the department they can get into, they don't necessarily come to my school because they want to come to my school – we're also the safety school – the students want to go to (*the other university in her town*), that's the national one, so this is the safety school and then they get into any department they can get into, even if they don't want to study that subject.

Maria: Really?

Zahava: Yes.

Maria: So they're not going because they have a burning desire to study that, they're just going because...

Zahava: No, no. So - this is an assumption that I think a lot of the foreign teachers make based on our own background - we don't know why our students are there, you know. So this is - I mean, my research is uncovering this for me. So all these, there's so many, I mean, the more I know, the less I know. And so that's frustrating, you know, and it shakes up my identity sometimes, and I think, 'well what am I doing here? Am I doing anything?' But I do think I am, so I have the confidence that I am doing something.

Maria: How, in your opinion, has living and working in another country changed you?

Zahava: Oh, it's changed me a lot - I grew up - I grew up and I woke up, you know. I think I was sleepwalking before I got here.

Maria: Yeah, you said that in your - in the survey as well.

Zahava: Yeah. Yeah. I was - when I came here, I - don't know - I became an adult, and I've learned how to prepare food, and I've learned principles of good nutrition. I've learned about how the - just exchanges between people, it's a gift, it's a gift, and it's a precious gift and shouldn't be taken for granted. And that harmony is lovely (laughs). No, whenever I go home, and people are in my face, like 'waah,' you know, so I appreciate those things a lot more - compromise, harmony, good food, grow up, responsibility, family, yeah.

Maria: How long have you been in Japan this time? I mean, since you returned from Canada.

Zahava: Eleven years.

Maria: Eleven years. You - do you consider Canada home or Japan home?

Zahava: Both. I don't really want to go back to Canada to live, and I know that whenever I go home for a holiday - I'm going home for a month, but actually two weeks is enough - well, three weeks is perfect - three weeks is perfect - four weeks is too long and I can't wait to come back to my house. It's everything, it's too easy, and I find people are lazy, and people are, they drive everywhere they have no self-discipline, they disgust me (laughs), they're dirty. I just -so, I mean, there's lots of wonderful things too- it's funky, there's more kinds of food, people are more laid back, it's relaxed, you can do what you want, you can wear what you want, no one's looking - they don't care if you wear make up or not. - I mean, usually I do not go out of the house without a face full of make up because you just don't in Japan. Women don't. So yeah.

Maria: Okay, do you speak Japanese?

Zahava: Yes.

Maria: Alright. Why did you choose to learn it? Did you learn it? Study it?

Zahava: I studied it. I studied it when I was in Kyoto. Cos I was - I just couldn't stand being illiterate. Well, I guess I am still illiterate in some sense, I mean I can read menus and I can get the gist of things. But I just couldn't stand having to rely on other people all the time. It that was just - aaargh, I want to be independent, I've always wanted to be independent.

Maria: Hmm. Well, how important do you think it is for an EFL teacher to learn the language of the country in which they live?

Zahava: I think it's really important (laughs).

Maria: Why?

Zahava: Well, you can understand from the language how people are thinking and you can understand – you know I find, sometimes I can say to my students, “You say this in Japanese, but actually in English we...” – Like, for example, the verb ‘yaku’ in Eng- in Japanese is - it’s grill in English but we have two words – like yaku in Japanese is grill or bake, but in English it’s grill or bake - we have two words for yaku. So I can say to students, “Well you have one word but actually in English we have two and this is for this and this is for that” and they go, “ahh!” and then I think yeah. If I know where they’re coming from then I know why they make the mistake they make and then I can help them with that.

Maria: Well, we’ve come to the end of the questions. Are there any questions you’d like to ask me?

Zahava: What are you looking for?

Maria: Oh, well I can show you these now, now that we’ve finished the interview, those are the research questions, down the bottom. And I will stop the recording now. Thank you.

Appendix F: Ethical clearance H10REA275

TOOWOOMBA QUEENSLAND 4350
AUSTRALIA
TELEPHONE +61 7 4631 2300

CRICOS: QLD 00244B NSW 02225M

www.usq.edu.au

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND HIGHER DEGREES

William Farmer

Ethics Officer

PHONE (07) 4631 2690 | FAX (07) 4631 1995

EMAIL ethics@usq.edu.au

Friday, 28 January 2011

Maria Pinto
Faculty of Education
Toowoomba Campus

Dear Maria

The USQ Fast Track Human Research Ethics Committee (FTHREC) assessed your application and agreed that your proposal meets the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. Your project has been endorsed and full ethics approval granted.

Project Title	Constructing the self: Teachers' narratives of teaching English-as-a-foreign-language
Approval no.	H10REA275
Expiry date	31/12/2012
FTHREC Decision	Approved with condition: 1) Can you please include on the interview consent form that the interview will be recorded

Please note: the application is approved unconditionally; the recommendations have the status of informal advice which you are not obliged to take note of.

The standard conditions of this approval are:

- (a) conduct the project strictly in accordance with the proposal submitted and granted ethics approval, including any amendments made to the proposal required by the HREC
- (b) advise (email: ethics@usq.edu.au) immediately of any complaints or other issues in relation to the project which may warrant review of the ethical approval of the project
- (c) make submission for approval of amendments to the approved project before implementing such changes
- (d) provide a 'progress report' for every year of approval
- (e) provide a 'final report' when the project is complete
- (f) advise in writing if the project has been discontinued.

For (c) to (e) forms are available on the USQ ethics website: <http://www.usq.edu.au/research/ethicsbio/human>

Please note that failure to comply with the conditions of approval and the *National Statement (2007)* may result in withdrawal of approval for the project.

You may now commence your project. I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.

William Farmer
Ethics Officer
Office of Research and Higher Degrees

Appendix G1: Interview coding

The interviews were initially coded using NVivo 9. The screenshot below shows the coding within the node (NVivo calls themes ‘nodes’) *Language learner*, and how one of the entries coded as ‘living in Japanese’ appeared in the transcript.

The screenshot displays the NVivo 9 interface. On the left, a sidebar shows the 'Nodes' list with 'Language learner' selected. The main window shows a table of nodes with columns for Name, Sources, References, and Created On. The 'living in Japanese' node is highlighted in blue. Below the table, a transcript snippet is shown, with a reference marker indicating a coded segment.

Name	Sources	References	Created On
Language learner	8	69	21/08/2012 05:19 p.m.
being a bad language learner	2	3	28/04/2012 09:49 p.m.
being a good language learner	1	1	13/09/2012 06:17 a.m.
being a language learner	2	2	28/04/2012 09:48 p.m.
different approaches to learning language in different countries	1	1	21/08/2012 05:22 p.m.
enjoying studying	1	1	21/08/2012 05:23 p.m.
family and language learning	1	1	28/04/2012 01:18 p.m.
focusing on role of English in life story	1	1	06/05/2012 11:56 a.m.
language learning in proportion to commitment to the country	2	3	28/04/2012 09:50 p.m.
learning a language well	1	1	13/09/2012 06:18 a.m.
learning English for different reasons (students)	1	2	28/04/2012 09:11 p.m.
learning language as difficult (teacher)	1	1	28/04/2012 09:52 p.m.
learning the local language	2	3	01/05/2012 06:16 p.m.
learning the local language as a marker of professionalism	1	1	09/06/2012 02:47 p.m.
learning the local language as important	8	25	28/04/2012 01:15 p.m.
learning the local language to a basic level	1	1	13/09/2012 06:16 a.m.
learning to read in languages	1	1	13/09/2012 06:15 a.m.
living in Japanese	2	2	21/08/2012 05:33 p.m.

<Internals\Transcriptions\Simon> - § 1 reference coded [1.48% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.48% Coverage

when I was younger, when I was living in another city, um, before I met my wife and I was you know 26, 27, I knew lots of people um who didn't learn to speak Japanese, um and I think there was a there was a danger- a danger? there was a window of opportunity for me to fall into that

Appendix G2: Interview coding

After the initial coding had been completed and revised, while working on the kernels of the themes that appear in Chapter 5, I decided to re-code one of the sections coded generally as ‘becoming a teacher.’ The entries had been coded under ‘becoming a teacher’ and ‘falling into teaching by chance’ and had been coded by theme. I had been re-reading Charmaz (2006) on coding line by line and decided to experiment with this type of coding. I chose to paste sections of the transcripts coded under ‘becoming a teacher’ and ‘falling into teaching by chance’ in NVivo into a Word document and coded line by line. After comparing the coding in the Word document with the codes in NVivo, I decided that coding line by line did not add sufficient value to the analysis of the teachers’ stories to justify the time it would take to re-code the interviews line by line as opposed to by theme. However, the screenshot below is provided as an example of another method of coding that I attempted to carry out, and because, ultimately, line by line coding this section got me thinking about the theme of volunteering and the importance of gap year experiences for the teachers in this study.

Teacher voices: becoming a teacher

Interviewee	Direct quote	Coding
Arielle	<p>"when I was 18, when I left school, I went to India for a year um as a volunteer, and there I was very lucky enough to work in an extremely exceptional experimental school um and that turned me on to teaching, becoming a teacher."</p> <p>"I well I discovered I liked teaching and, but I also realized how important education was – it was something I'd taken completely from granted until that point"</p>	<p>Volunteering at a school</p> <p>Changing career path into teaching</p> <p>Liking teaching</p> <p>Deciding education was important</p>
Lackey	<p>"before I went to university I spent a year in New Zealand the gap year, year off. I was actually at a school, helping out, um, not really doing any teaching at all, just as kind of general dogsbody kind of thing, but that was – it was a really life changing experience for me."</p> <p>"we decided to do some travelling spur of the you know kind of get a get out of the rat race"</p> <p>"Jane, my wife, had had taken a TESOL certification, the Trinity TESOL, which I think still runs. ... she found a job for us in Korea"</p>	<p>Exposure to teaching is a life-changing experience</p> <p>Teaching as a means to travel</p> <p>Falling into teaching because of his wife</p>
Gabriel	<p>"so in my major was History, I had to write sort of a thesis, an undergraduate thesis thing, and History was like oh you know what –actually we don't count the Honours Thesis, you have to do your own for History as well ... so I thought, you know, I'm not gonna write two History theses here, I'm gonna write something else ...and so, on around that same time, I decided to take a class on teaching, it was it was um a TESOL class, and it was just really cool and everything just sort of locked into place"</p>	<p>Rejecting his major</p> <p>Taking a TESOL course (accidentally)</p> <p>Enjoying teaching</p> <p>Finding (self? place?)</p>

Appendix H1: Sample handwritten journal entry

Developing the figure that appears as the conceptual framework (Figure 1.1). Appendix H1 shows some iterations of the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 1, linking identity, time, place and culture. I originally started with the idea of place being different types of houses (the figure at the bottom of the page), within a circle referring to culture. An eye in the middle of the drawing represented the self, seeing and being seen. As I tried to clarify the image, including a second circle, to indicate another culture (the middle drawing), I removed the houses. Later, I returned to the page to play with the idea of starting each chapter with a poem, which I scribbled in pencil in the gaps on the page. When I started to draw the image into Powerpoint, I realized that I didn't have the skill to draw different types of houses, and the idea of drawing people, communicating, in different cultural contexts, came to me. I realized that the people embodied the idea of 'self' and 'Other' and communication, while different seating arrangements could stand for cultural differences and a corresponding shift in worldview in the self in a different cultural context. The drawings and poetry in this appendix show different stages of my thinking about the subject, leading gradually to the complex simplicity of the final image included in Chapter 1.

People "just like me" (Gendered ^{adaptation to the countries} representation of
 - Sekimoto (2012) (Machida-Louty (1962) Young (2003))
 (what name says) p.235

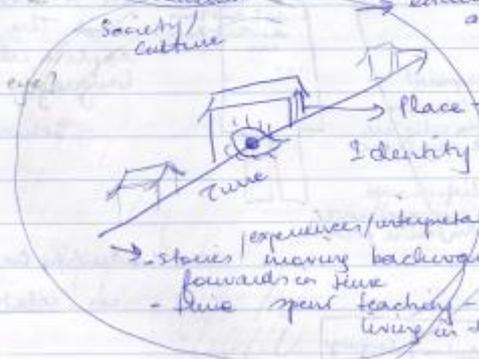
As time ^{moves} goes on
 (M) Identity keeps marching, changing
 through different places, spaces,
 cultural worlds.

The same "I",
 But different.

Who I am interpreted through
 who I might have been,
 Had I not
 Moved.
 Changed.
 Grown.

Home, too, changed
 Reflective lenses
 Time
 Culture
 I: different way of connecting
 with the world
 → enculturation /
 acculturation

Changing homes
 A changed home.
 but only in the mind's eye?



Appendix H2: The development of the thesis, shown via journal entries

In this Appendix, I include a series of journal entries outlining the chapter headings I experimented with while writing the thesis. I have chosen to include all the entries relating to chapter headings because they show how I was thinking about organizing the data I was working with, and how these continued to change as my ideas about the structure of the thesis evolved along with the content.

10 February 2013

I need to work out how to tell the story of the literature review sections...

I'm considering an overlay of ... here is the story of English, and of English language teaching. Here is the story of culture, and the cultures of Korea, Japan, and the western countries the teachers come from. Here is the story of identity, and here are the ways in which teachers have constructed their identities...

2 September 2013

Dissertation layout:

Option 1: the layout I currently have

Advantages – the chapters are sorted out according to the headings I'm planning to have.

Disadvantages – it's not easy to visualise my way through the dissertation . I feel like I'm forcing a qualitative dissertation into a quantitative framework.

Option 2: a better flow.

Intro → my autobiography and how my interests and past led to the development of this dissertation topic → the role of culture → the role of identity → EFL teacher identities: the interviewees → the role of chance in the making of EFL teachers (Falling into teaching) → language learning and language teaching: identity in flux → finding/making a place for oneself / questioning the self/contribution → (another) culture and self in collision: (negative) emotions in assimilating → the constructed self (conclusion)

29 January 2014 – ordering the dissertation

The story I'm telling is a fragmented one in the dissertation as it currently is – I jump around from place to place.

So, in reading the whole thing, looking at the big picture just now, it occurred to me to change things up, to enhance the 'story' aspect of the dissertation, and space out the technical stuff I have to include. Am thinking of changing to starting with the intro, then moving into how the dissertation came into being – the features in myself that led to the various research questions and then to the interview questions – then moving from that to the methodology, which I can go into more detail about once I've talked about my personal role in the design earlier, and have also laid out the research questions previously.

From there, I would move into the interviewees summary, and set the scene for South Korea and Japan by taking the interview and survey data that explains what the school system is like. (I might even add the stories of South Korea and Japan to this section?)

Then I would move into the constructing the self part of identity – looking at the tell me about your background question and the responses to this. (This might be a good place to talk about 'Western' cultures and their differences from South Korea and Japan?)

After that, I would move into the literature review on identity, and, if it fit, discuss in greater detail what had been said in the previous chapter.

From there, I would move into the literature review on culture, and link together the threads of culture in the earlier chapters to a discussion of identity and culture.

Then I would move to the first culture chapter . looking at living and working in another country, and at reverse culture shock. From there, I would move into the next culture chapter, looking at differences in workplace culture, and then do a case study of John and Korea.

The last chapter would go back to identities in flux – small things in each story that made an impact and why.

And then the conclusion.

16 November 2014 – A dissertation in stories.

What would the chapter titles be?

1. Introduction

Put the literature review sections on identity and culture here. Mention the eight interviewees, and where they're from – put the brief bios at the end of this chapter?

Define why narrative inquiry, and what it is.

Outline the story: eight interviewees, long term EFL teachers, I wanted to focus on their lives, and also see what newbies could learn from experienced teachers who have chosen to remain in EFL.

2. Methodology

Is very list-like, but leave it for the moment.

3. Constructing the self

LR focus in this chapter is on (1) constructing identity, (2) maintaining a coherent narrative over time, (3) looking at these constructed narratives through the common metaphors the teachers use, and in the concept of 'life stages' for EFL teachers:

- fall into it by accident
- stay for personal reasons
- do further studies to mark self as professional, and job as a profession
- (a) get burnt out and leave; or (b) stay and create one's own challenges

Alternate 'life stages' – the traveller – how is this trope sustained through James' narrative - arrogance 'I have lived in more countries than you have fingers and toes' 'I'm American and try to consciously remain that way'. Will only stay for a couple of years, and only for his son. Wife is the interpreter / liaison with the world.

Segue into differences between the males and the females? No – leave till later.

4. Being a teacher 1: On teaching

A crucial component of identity is interaction with others. Self is defined in interactions with other people. Teacher-constructed narratives of their past, of better

personal and pedagogical events, shape teacher identities....

5. Being a teacher 2: The workplace

To locate the teachers in identity, they first need to be put in context. All the teachers had taught for at least ten years, in at least two countries.

6. A stranger in a strange land: The issue of culture

7. A letter to John

8. Conclusion

24 August 2015

My dissertation was, finally, to have 8 chapters. Now it has 9: four chapters about the interviewees. The format is that of an onion – peeling away layers – first, the interviewees in labels. Then their pasts, their histories, the story of self they construct. The third of their chapters deals with their teaching selves – how they got into teaching, why they stay, what they’ve learnt, the influences on their teaching. The last of the four places them in context with the cultures they come from and the cultures they live in.

Then there is the eighth chapter. The chapter about me. I called it ‘A letter to John’ because I wanted it to be me responding to the interviewees the way I couldn’t / didn’t in the interviews. But I also hate being in the public domain so it stresses me out to have a chapter about myself... Could I have a paragraph or two in each chapter instead?

15 September 2016

Blend the literature review with the rest of the thesis – start with stories, divide the literature review into two – first identity, then, separately, culture. The advantage would be the focus on stories – telling my story, the interviewees’ stories. The disadvantages would be a non-traditional format, and chopping the teachers’ lives into discrete sections.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: The researcher and the interviewees

Chapter 3: Methodology
Chapter 4a: Introducing the interviewees
Chapter 4b: The interviewees: what they wrote
Chapter 5: Identity
Chapter 6: Literature Review - Culture
Chapter 7: The interviewees: What they said
Chapter 8: The impact of culture on the EFL teacher
Chapter 9: Identities in flux
Chapter 10: Conclusion

20 February 2018

Division of the chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Literature review
3. Methodology
4. Life (Hi)stories
5. Teaching EFL
6. Culture and the EFL teacher

[7. Identity/ies in flux] (might not happen – it's been the most difficult to define and might be subsumable into the other three chapters.)

8. Conclusion

Four chapters telling the teachers' stories: Chapter 4 summarizes the transcripts, Chapter 5 focuses on the teacher in the classroom, chapter 6 focuses on the teacher living in another country, and chapter 7 focuses on the moments of dissonance, where the teachers experimented with different positions in the interviews.

2018 (undated, sometime between February and October)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 4: Maria's stories (Intro – brief life / EFL story; A letter to John, Talking about Korea, Learning to be me, A tale of two interviews)

Chapter 5: Life (hi)stories (no change)

Chapter 6: Resonances and reflections

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Between 18 and 23 January 2019

Chapter 1: Introduction

~~Writing the self~~ Where are you *really* from?

Chapter 2: Walking between worlds

~~Where are you really from?: Identity, ethnicity and stereotyping~~ Talking about Korea

Chapter 3: Methodology

A tale of two interviews

Chapter 4: Life (hi)stories

A letter to John / ~~Talking about Korea~~

Chapter 5: Resonances and reflections

Ethnicity (People just like me)

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Appendix H3: Sample handwritten journal entry

Analysis of themes in [Chapter 5](#).

Chapter 5: Resonances and reflections.

what is the point of this chapter? what is my argument here? At the moment, it seems to be "oh look, here's some really cool stuff - and here's where they all feel the same, and here's where I have a problem with them: That's not enough."

Why have I chosen to focus on these things? How are these things contributing to the body of knowledge on OFE teachers?

④ OFE teacher as job of all trades

① NS as a resource / flexibility (variety of jobs lumped together under this heading) → to all English taught in a foreign country not just the teaching of English as a foreign language.

② Rosen for the OFE teacher to express facets of self - their past career, interests and follow their interests. (eg Zahava - Medical English)

③ Teacher can move into a variety of places, perhaps as opposed to traditional teaching.

⑤ Caution that maybe this putting too much meaning into accidental developments: "chance" or "chance".

finding 1: Zahavata (1997) - Cultural informant aspect on the home culture.

finding 2a: Cooper & Olson (1996) Day, King, Ion, Stobart & Sanamoro (2006)

- link to the characteristics the teacher felt they expressed about their own teaching selves?
 - passion, knowledge & willingness to share this
- importance of emotion in being a teacher
- forming connections, feeling teachers care
- keeping on engaged
- challenging
- made time for this
- forming connections

finding 2b: I love my students

Hess (2003) - flip side - caring about students

Course (2011) - Japan - echoes what we know about teachers

Fauell (2011) - ESL in Canada - acculturation

Lee (2010) - what Japanese learners value about OFE teachers

Bay (2006) Hell (2005)?
Lois & Lee (2006) ? Lee (2010)

Notes on the left margin:
 - Main, the NEST is regarded as an essential component of the curriculum
 - OFE teacher has a variety of jobs lumped together under this heading
 - "chance" or "chance"
 - The need to form of the teacher - connections
 - An OFE teacher identity is a family term, but not a profession
 - The need to form of the teacher - connections
 - An OFE teacher identity is a family term, but not a profession

Appendix H4: Sample handwritten journal entry

Analysis of themes in [Chapter 5](#).

(*) Teaching EFL is like being a jack of all trades. ~~from~~ My ~~own~~ personal experience is that, despite specifying that I prefer to teach at university level, and to teach university students, I ~~to~~ was fanned out to teach primary school students, hogwan classes, ~~and~~ genuine classes, ~~and~~ high school students, and computer vocational training (computer/IT course) students by one employer. The interviewees have similarly chequered careers...

Derek Lackey first taught at a hogwan ^{in SK} then moved to teaching one-on-one business classes ^{at a university in the Czech Republic}, then taught Marketing and Business Law and IELTS to Chinese university students in NZ, then to becoming a head teacher and running weekend activities for ESP students - then from there to teaching conversation classes in SK, ^{to} doing teacher training for elementary school teachers for part of the time. 10 - school-age students, to adults, to university, to adult + university. Students who were forced to be there →

146-154 students who wanted to be there → students who were forced to be there. Also, small to large classes, seeing students everyday, seeing them once a week, seeing them for a short period of time and then they leave... Classes vary on several dimensions: student age, ~~at~~ number of students, frequency of classes, ^{as} (expected) ability level, subject taught (conversation, EPP/ESP, fluency, ^{for, case, IELTS, exam prep}). The teacher also has to adapt ^{to} the cultural context by learning cultural referents

Appendix H5: Sample typed journal entry

The quote in Reflection R3 comes from this journal entry.

The role of the interviewer

As an interviewer, I decided I would be a blank slate (read stuff about the role of the interviewer, this decided me – also about how the interviewer can bias the interview with the way in which questions are formulated and asked) – I tried to focus on asking open-ended questions, not closed questions, and not giving an opinion.

I think this worked quite well – however, the only instance it didn't work was in the interview with me, where the interviewer was a work colleague. I chose her because she had just recently completed a Masters dissertation that involved interviewing several teachers (more than once), so I knew she had done the same research I had done into the role of the interviewer. What I didn't take into account was how well we knew each other. I knew none of my interviewees well – they were all acquaintances, or strangers. My interviewer and I had worked together for six years, studied Korean together, I had shared an office with her husband for a year, and babysat her child.

I gave her a copy of the questions, and my responses to the survey two weeks in advance of the interview. The original interview date had to be postponed, because she had a migraine, and the interview was conducted the day before she was due to leave the country to go on holiday.

Before the interview, she asked me how I had been approaching the interviews, and I said I'd been asking the questions more or less in order – starting with the first question, and then moving around the rest of the questions depending on where the first question took me. I also said that I had been asking the questions, but leaving the answers free to the interviewee.

I found the interview a very frustrating experience because she interrupted me constantly, and kept trying to answer the questions based on her knowledge of me, and her assumptions of what I thought / felt. I think I should have chosen someone who did not know me well – perhaps one of the practice interviewees, who would have had the experience of being interviewed, and my approach to asking questions, to draw on.

25 September 2011

Appendix H6: Voices in my head

(13 August 2012)

The voices of the teachers I interviewed
Echo in my head
When I teach
When I talk about teaching
When I talk with my colleagues.
Their choices inform my choices.

I hear Gabriel talking about his five year plan
(Five countries in five years, and then home, forever)
And think about my three year plan
(Latin America, learn Spanish, teach English,
And then home, forever).

John's distinctive voice and accent
Pop into my head
Whenever I try to make sense of my time in Korea
His negativity.
I struggle to put my experiences
Into perspective,
Because I can't argue against what he said –
What he said was all true.

James tried to speak for Everyman,
And rarely for himself.
I hear his voice less.

Beth and I are both women,
Both worked in Korea,
Both left.
Beth's voice says what I feel,
"I left Korea
Because I thought
I'd never date again
If I stayed."
The quieter voices are those of
Simon, Arielle, Lackey, and Zahava.
I can't relate as much to them.

Lackey talked in 'we' and 'us'.
I love Lackey,
And his wife,
But I envy them their luck,
Their closeness,
Travelling together,
Being a unit.
Being 'we', not 'I'.

Arielle thought deeply
About the questions I asked,
But didn't articulate her answers.
When I hear Arielle's voice,
I hear her saying,
"Thank you, Maria,
For making me
Think so deeply
About my life."
And then the silence
Of all the unrecorded things
She said
After I turned the recorder off.
Should I have asked her
To repeat them,
For the record?

I hear Simon's voice
Talking about methods
About trying all the methods he could find
To become a better teacher.

Zahava could be herself more
Through teaching
I am my (inner) self less
When I'm teaching
I hide behind my persona
And I like that,
So, in a way,
Zahava and I are both actresses
She amplifies her personality
In the classroom,
I subsume it,
To become 'teacher' Maria.

I don't hear my own voice
But I haven't finished
Transcribing the second interview
And the first,
I care not to hear
Again.

Appendix I: Hofstede's value dimension scores for BANA countries, South Korea, and Japan

Page ref	Scores	Australia	The USA	Great Britain	Canada	Japan	South Korea
(p.240)	Long-term orientation	31	29	25	23	80	75
(pp.120-121)	Masculinity	61	62	66	52	95	39
(pp.43-44)	Power distance	36	40	35	39	54	60
(pp.168-169)	Uncertainty avoidance	51	46	35	48	92	85
(pp.78-79)	Individualism	90	91	89	80	46	18
	Indulgence	71	68	69	68	42	29

Scores for the first five value dimensions come from Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) (see the page reference column for the page references)

Scores for Indulgence / Restraint come from Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010, pp. 282-283).

Appendix J: From questionnaire data and story to narrative

Example one paragraph summary of a teacher (Arielle):

Arielle

Arielle comes from a small town on the east coast of England. At the time of the interview, she was in her late 40s. Influenced by reading the novel *Kim* in high school, she did volunteer work in a school in India for almost a year during her gap year. Seeing the students' passion for learning changed her life. After completing her undergraduate degree in English, Arielle moved to Japan, with the aim of saving up money to return to India. She returned briefly to the UK to teach English, but then returned to Japan. She is married to a Japanese man, with whom she has a daughter, and had lived in Japan for 24 years at the time of the interview. She has a Master of Education degree and has also completed a TESL/TEFL certificate course. Arielle teaches at a university in Japan. She has been there for more than ten years.

Example of analysis of questionnaire responses (Gabriel):

From the survey

Gabriel was between 30 and 34 years of age at the time he completed the survey. He is American, and describes his ethnic nationality as 'White.' He had taught English for more than ten years, in Japan and South Korea. He had worked in Korea for six years, and planned to stay in Korea for at least a couple of years more. His undergraduate degree was in History. He had also completed CELTA and an MATESOL degree.

He did not work with other foreign teachers at the university he worked at, and had been there for less than one year. On average, he only had 6 students per class. The classrooms were equipped with a black- or whiteboard, video/DVD watching facilities, and a teacher's computer, with internet connection.

He had studied foreign languages in secondary school and at university. He described himself as speaking Spanish with an intermediate level of proficiency, and rated himself an 'advanced beginner' in the Korean language. He had studied Korean in the past, and said he spoke it well enough for day-to-day interactions.

He described a good teacher as ‘reflective,’ and a good student as ‘curious,’ and thought that the easiest way to learn another language was ‘through a combination of language and fluency focus.’

The thing he liked best about his current job were the work conditions – this was an important factor to him in choosing to work in South Korea. What he likes best about working in Korea are the ‘great opportunities for advancement.’ He loves living in Korea because of the food and the people, but says that the most challenging aspect of living and working in another country are the ‘cultural differences and chances for misunderstandings and conflicts between expectations.’ He thinks that living in another country has made him ‘more adaptable (mentally and physically). ‘ He misses friends and family in the USA.

Example of the themes that appeared at the end of the teachers’ narratives in an earlier version of the narratives in this chapter (James):

Themes in James’ story

James figures his identity as a traveler. As travelling is normal for him, so is adjusting to new situations. He takes cultural differences in his stride, and focuses on maintaining the self. This comes out when he talks about language learning, and only learning languages to the extent that he needs them.

For James, teaching is a *decision*, not something he fell into accidentally. However, he *fell into* teaching EFL because of a *lack of employment options* in the USA. *Travelling*, for James, is figured *as normal* and *routine*, because of having moved so many times when he was younger. James’ story also illustrates the *importance of English*, and *the importance of the US economy to other countries*, because many of his jobs were part of governmental or private outreach efforts to other countries.

The pattern James identifies in his story is that he is *committed to his life*. This comes out in his stories of teaching in Tajikistan, where he focuses on living in the country, not on the teaching, continues through his stories of choosing to learn or not learn the language of the country where he lives.

James is strongly focused on *putting events in context* : providing the socioeconomic, political, or cultural context around his experiences.