Narratively performed role identities of visible ethnic minority, native English speaking teachers in TESOL

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List of Abbreviations (in alphabetical order)

AAE  African American English
AAVE  African American vernacular English
BE    Black English
ELT   English language teaching
ERI   Event role identities
NS    Native speaker
NES   Native English speaker
NNES  Non-native English speaker
NNS   Non-native speaker
NEST  Native English speaking teacher
NNEST Non-native English speaking teacher
NRI   Narrator role identities
PRI   Performed role identity
TESOL Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
VEM   Visible ethnic minority
VEM-NEST Visible ethnic minority, native English speaking teacher
Abstract

The binary distinction of “native speaker” and “non-native speaker” (NS/NNS) remains the primary way in which professionals are categorised in the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). This distinction is problematic because it is used to place greater value on native English speaking teachers (NEST) over non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs). This distinction is argued to be largely based on linguistic features (Medgyes 1992; Cook 1999). However the aspect of race remains to be adequately discussed (Kubota and Lin 2006).

This thesis has its origins in my personal experiences with racism because, as a Canadian-Filipino, my employer and my students did not accept me as a “real” NEST because I am “non-white”. In my initial research, during my MA TESOL, into the professional experiences of racism I coined the acronym “VEM-NEST”: visible ethnic minority, native English speaking teacher. I used this term to describe the particular group of teachers, to which I belong, who do not easily fit into the available categories of NS/NNS, and consequently NEST/NNEST.

My thesis reported on the experiences of nine VEM-NESTs and how they performed specific identities during specific events. Their experiences were presented as individual restoried narratives which were developed from the combination of the participants’ written stories and one-to-one interviews. The restoried narratives were analysed using an analytical lens based on Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) structural approach.

The findings suggest that VEM-NESTs need to meet a certain amount of “native speaker” norms in order to be given the opportunity to perform their VEM-NEST role identities in specific situations. This has particular implications for how the NS/NNS binary distinction needs a more nuanced understanding as a way of addressing the inequalities embedded in the way TESOL professionals are valued.
Declaration

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 The story of my professional experiences

My study has its origins in my professional experiences as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher in China where at times my ethnic identity affected the way I was perceived as an English language teacher. I was employed based on my native English-speaking identity (NES), but my appearance as a Canadian-Filipino challenged the expectations regarding NESs and NESTs held by my employers, colleagues, students, and parents. I will explore the concepts of native English speaking teacher (NEST) and non-native English speaking teacher (NNEST) in later chapters. However, by way of introducing the topic of my thesis I begin with a short narrative of my own experiences. The following excerpt has been adapted from the version included as part of my chapter in Nunan and Choi:

Background: I’m a Canadian-Filipino and by this description I consider myself both Canadian and Filipino, but how is this combination really defined? I’ve been asking myself that question and still haven’t arrived at a satisfactory answer. My parents immigrated from the Philippines to Canada in 1976. I was born three years later and became the first grandchild born abroad and would be the first of the family to have grown up influenced by two different cultures.

My parents had a strong influence in my cultural upbringing. From an early age I was taught the "rules" of how to conduct myself in Filipino society. However, my parents also wanted their daughter to be a "full" Canadian and insisted that I grew up speaking only English so that I could more easily integrate into Canadian society. I wasn’t encouraged to learn Tagalog (the Philippine national language) or Ilocano (my mother’s language) for fear that it would be a hindrance to my development as a "full" Canadian. As such, I was expected to participate in learning Canada’s other official language: French. From the age of five to fourteen I learned French formally at school. I eventually stopped learning French not only because it was compulsory (up to that age) but also because at the time I didn’t see any use for it in my future. Parallel to this decision was my own choice to forgo

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1 see Javier 2010, in Nunan and Choi, eds., p. 97 - 103 for the original version
attempts at learning my parent’s languages due to the fact that in many ways I didn’t "feel" Filipino enough to do so. Ironically at university some of my courses involved studying various dead languages, such as Latin, Ancient Greek and Aramaic. These I relished, because they didn’t have a stake in my own identity. I could study these languages free of any further implication they would have had on me.

When I finished university I travelled to China to teach English. During my time there I was often mistaken for a local teacher because of my Filipino background. In this context I discovered that my students had certain pre-conceptions of what an English language teacher embodies. Whenever I walked into a classroom to start a brand new course, my initial appearance would often be met with a mixture of surprise and disappointment, and sometimes with anger. At the time I couldn’t understand what my students were saying to each other but it was clear from their facial expressions that they didn’t feel comfortable with me as their teacher, at least initially. From the outset it became apparent that the majority of students assumed that a “native speaker” would not only be from Canada (or the UK, USA or Australia), but that they would also be white. This was a huge eye-opener for me because I hadn’t thought that my ethnicity would be an issue, much less a liability. For a while I felt extremely frustrated with my situation because I found it difficult to cope and couldn’t find a solution. I also felt isolated. My colleagues were very supportive and encouraged me along the way, yet, they didn’t share the same anxieties as I did simply because they didn’t look like a local.

One of the ways I used to address this issue was first to expect the mixed reactions of my students whenever I started a new class. This way I was better able to prepare myself both emotionally and practically for the challenge of, essentially, proving my credentials as their English language teacher. Therefore, part of my routine when starting a brand new class was to launch into a mini-monologue about myself. I would usually share some anecdote about my life in Canada and present it at a normal speaking rate as a way of demonstrating that I was a “native speaker” of English. As soon as I finished it seemed that my students immediately became more willing and open to the idea of accepting me as their English teacher. In a way, it was my attempt to "strike first" by establishing who I am before any doubts set in.
Ironically, I took to studying Chinese as a way to “blend in” to the world outside the classroom. To a certain extent I was granted an insiders’ view because people would carry on with whatever they were doing when I entered the scene. However, as soon as I spoke Chinese my charade was up and their behaviour changed. I found this very frustrating because I wasn’t quite sure what was expected of me. I looked like I should speak Chinese, but I don’t. People were often confused since my outside appearance didn’t fit into their idea of a "foreigner".

The following section is a description of an event from my own experiences that serves to highlight the issues surrounding “native-speakers” of colour.

**Event:** It was toward the end of the 15-minute break and I was back inside the classroom erasing the whiteboard in preparation for the next session. I had been in the country for nearly nine months and, at the time, considered myself rather conversant in Chinese. I was able to travel independently around the city, go shopping and read basic Chinese characters. However, I made it a point not to let my students know that I understood the language as I found that their assumptions about my lack of Chinese language ability helped to distance myself from my students.

This was only the third lesson that I had with this group of students and sometimes I would have a few latecomers joining the class for the first time. Consequently they would miss the pre-prepared speech I so often gave at the beginning of each course and, upon arrival, were confused with my appearance. Usually, during these instances I would let the other students inform their classmates about me. It took the pressure off me to try to validate my position as their teacher, which was relief in many ways. I eavesdropped on their conversation, which took place in Chinese, and usually went along these lines:

- New Student: “I thought our teacher was a native speaker!”
- Current Student: “She is a native speaker.”
- New Student: (pause) “But she looks Chinese!”
- Current Student: “She’s not! She’s Canadian.”

At the time I wasn’t really aware of the implications that this conversation had, other than feeling that I’d rather let my students defend my right to be there at the front of the
classroom than repeating my speech over again. On this particular day, though, I remember one of the new students approached me with the following question (in English):

New Student: “So, you’re not Chinese?”
Me: “No, not at all!”
New Student: “You’re family is Chinese?”
Me: “No, none of them are Chinese. Both my parents are
from the Philippines.”

New Student: “But your English is so good!”
Me: “Well, I’m a native speaker.”
New Student: “Of course.”

At this point I could tell she wasn’t convinced of my English credentials. I felt myself grow increasingly frustrated and I found myself defensively saying the following:

“I’m from Canada.”

Suddenly the light seemed to go on. Her face lit up in a smile and she thanked me for my time before sitting down, obviously pleased with the news. I had told previous classes that I was from Canada but this was the first time that I had used that fact as a deliberate way of validating my as a “native-speaker”.

1.2 The story of my MA study: exploring my professional experiences

My personal experiences were the starting point for my research interests and what follows is a brief summary of the research I undertook during my MA TESOL studies. Through my initial explorations I developed the term “VEM-NEST” (visible ethnic minority - native English speaking teacher) as a way to name the group of individuals to which I belonged to and whose experiences I sought to learn more about.

From my previous explorations there were two key findings. Firstly, the VEM-NESTS that took part in my MA study strategically drew attention to their nationality as a way of justifying their claim to being a NES. The participants were working in countries where English was considered a foreign language, employed by schools that specifically sought “native-speakers” of English. When faced with challenges to their NES identity, the participants actively foregrounded their national identities to mark themselves as
"foreigners" so that they could distinguish themselves from the local teaching staff. In my MA study, "foreigner" meant the American, British or Canadian aspect of their identity that, when emphasised in certain contexts, provided the necessary justification to first be accepted as a NES, and then be given the opportunity to work as a NEST.

Foregrounding their nationalities was a way for VEM-NESTs in my MA study to elevate themselves above the status of being considered "non–white". The "non-white" status was regarded by others in their teaching contexts as detrimental to the participants’ claims to being a “native-speaker”. By foregrounding their nationalities the VEM-NESTs in my MA study were more likely to be considered a foreigner (Javier 2010:39). In making this distinction, each participant was accepted as a NES because they were treated as the exception to the view of American/ British/ Canadian meaning white (Javier 2010:41). My MA study reiterated how the native-speaker model continues to be used to place value on TESOL professionals, despite the gradual acceptance of the VEM-NESTs in my MA study as "real" “native-speaker”. Moreover, this study also highlighted the need to further examine why white racial identities are associated with the native-speaker model in TESOL.

Secondly, my previous research highlighted the different ways in which VEM-NESTs interpreted how others perceived their racial and ethnic identities in their particular professional contexts, as illustrated by the following quotes from the participants themselves:

Tong (British - Thai) - Things were going great but after a while, I started hearing comments, through my colleagues, that some parents were not satisfied with my role as the native English teacher. The school charges all parents extra fee for employing a native speaker and some parents were saying that they wanted a refund because I am Thai and not really a native speaker. Some of my colleagues responded by saying that there is proof that I am in fact a native speaker and that sort of defused the situation. I have to say I was not surprise to hear this but couldn’t help being disappointed (Javier 2010: 60).

Rei (Asian - American) - Generally parents were pretty ok with me being their kid’s foreign teacher, and most of them liked the fact that I was young and from the USA, but there were a few that had asked for their kid to be moved to another class because I think they wanted a white foreign teacher (Javier 2010: 68).

Maelyn (Canadian - Filipino) - My experience as a visible ethnic minority in South Korea was mostly positive. However, at the beginning I had a tough time finding a job because of my ethnic background, but once I got there it seemed like there was no problem (Javier 2010: 72).
All of these participants faced challenges to their NEST identity but managed the situations in different ways. In the first example, Tong was aware that his Thai background could potentially be problematic and while he was prepared to be rejected by some of the parents, he was still disappointed despite having the support of his colleagues who tried to defend his NEST identity. Rei’s quote is more of a statement of fact in which some parents accepted her NEST identity whereas others did not, removing their children out of her class so that they may be taught by someone who fit their idea of a NES. Out of the three narratives, Maelyn had the most positive outlook. She was aware of the potential challenge her ethnicity had on gaining employment, but felt this was not as problematic as it could have been because of her particular situation, as described in her own words, “I found my status to be equal to those of a white nationality, but I don't know if it was because I taught at a smaller school and my husband was white” (Javier 2010: 73).

The main findings of my masters dissertation contributed towards calling attention to racial and ethnic identities are as much a part of the NS/NNS binary distinction as linguistic identities. However, these findings were limited in their scope because the focus was more on the "what" rather than the "why". It is the latter focus on which the study, reported here, sought to address.

1.3 Research questions and design

The aim of this study was to provide a more nuanced definition of the NEST label by examining the ways VEM-NEST negotiated their teacher identities using the NS/NNS binary distinction. There were three research questions that guided this thesis:

RQ1. What VEM-NEST related events occurred in the participants’ restored narratives?
RQ2. How did the participants perform their role identities during these events?
RQ3. How do the participants understand VEM-NEST as a role identity?

This study initially focused on answering a single research question “What are the experiences of VEM-NESTs in TESOL?” As the study progressed I felt that this research question was too broad in scope and was not fit for purpose. I was concerned with learning about VEM-NEST teacher identities and the initial research question did not
reflect the aims of the thesis. I sought to develop coherence between my thesis aims and my conceptual framework. Consequently I developed research questions that more closely aligned with what I set out to do in this study. This resulted in revising the original research question into three separate questions.

The research questions appear in the order that they needed to be addressed. The first research question focuses on identifying data related specifically to VEM-NEST. The second research question examines the answers from the first research question by specifically focusing on how VEM-NEST identities were performed. The last research question broadens out the study to examine what can be learned about VEM-NEST as seen as a role identity.

This study examined the experiences of VEM-NESTs using a narrative based research approach. The data generated through this approach enabled me to explore the different ways this particular group of teachers defined their identities, and how they "performed" their identities in specific situations.

1.4 Definition of key terms

The terms in this section are presented as starting points to familiarise the reader with the key areas of this study. These terms are discussed later in Chapter Two.

*Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL):* This study is situated in the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages. This term describes the field of English language teaching in various contexts around the world.

*Native speaker (NS) / Native English speaker (NES) and Non-native speaker (NNS) / Non-native English speaker (NNES):* In TESOL, professionals largely appear to be categorised in terms of either “native-speaker” (NS), or “non-native speaker” (NNS). This binary distinction is largely based on linguistic features reflected in the terms of either "native-speaker" (NS), or "non-native speaker" (NNS) of the English language (Medgyes 1999; Jenkins 2009). Overall, these terms are a model based on an assumption of deficiency (Cook 1999), in which individuals who are NS are attributed as the source of “Standard”
variety of English (Kachru 1990) where NNS are imitators (Cook 1999) and/or learners (Medgyes 1999) regardless of the level of proficiency achieved.

Native English speaking teachers (NEST) and Non-native English speaking teachers (NNEST): Closely related to the NS/NNS definition is the way NESTs and NNESTs are defined on the assumption that competency in the English language is associated with teaching ability (Liu 1999; Braine 1999; Park 2012). This view has been challenged from different perspectives, from challenging the notions of “Standard English” (e.g. Jenkins 2009) and the native-speaker model (Holliday 2006; 2009) to re-evaluating the value of NNESTs (Leung 1997; Llurda 2004).

Race and ethnicity: The terms race and ethnicity are central to my study and while some scholars view race as separate from ethnicity (see Kolchin 2002) I purposely use the two terms interchangeably, as they are both social constructs that overlap. As a social construct, racial representations are always in flux and situated in social and historical processes (Kubota and Lin 2009), with imagined boundaries used to distinguish one race from the other (Miles 1987). Race and ethnicity has been equated with "a racially marked culture" (Philips 1972) where individuals are seen to belong to a "culture" that is regarded as discrete and homogenised in a way that individuals become representatives of an entire group. Academic research has moved on from these traditional definitions of race and ethnicity to recognise the fluidity between boundaries that re-defines these concepts (see Back and Solomos 2000; Winant 2000). For the purposes of this thesis, I continue to use a "layman’s" approach because it is the view that is applied to the NS/NNS binary distinction in TESOL.

Visible ethnic minority: The term “visible ethnic minority” was taken from 2006 terminology used in The National Household Survey of Canada (Statistics Canada 2006) and was a term I used to identify myself growing up in Canada. In the 2006 census it was demographic category that referred to a person or group that was not visibly part of the majority population. At the time, the census defined the majority population in number as “Caucasian - white” whereas “non-Caucasian/ non-white” were considered smaller in terms of population number and therefore classified as a minority. Since 2006 it has been
argued that the term “visible ethnic minority” is problematic. For example, some areas of Canada “non-whites” have become the majority population because of their numbers (see Hamilton 2008). More pressing is the implied invisibleness of the “Caucasian-white” demographic that has yet to be critiqued in the Canadian census. While there is no internationally recognised definition of visible ethnic minority, I used Statistics Canada as a starting point for developing my own definition used in term VEM-NEST.

Visible ethnic minority, native English speaking teacher (VEM-NEST): This is a term I developed in order to identify a specific group of teachers that share similar characteristics. The phrase “visible ethnic minority” refers to the way the participant’s ethnic identity becomes “visible” because when negotiating their NEST identity. In their particular contexts, the participants’ racial and ethnic identities became the focus of discussion, rendering their identities “visible”. In comparison, white racial identities of NESTs are considered “invisible” because it is the assumed racial identity, with very little identity negotiation taking place.

Racism(s) and racialisation: As will be discussed in Chapter Two, racism is generally viewed as overt forms of prejudice and discrimination rather than embedded in the structures and institutions of society. Conceptually, racism itself is focused on perceived differences between different types of human bodies that symbolises the socially and historically constructed practices (Omi and Winant 1993) that perpetuates unequal relations which render the Other as inferior to the Self (Kubota and Lin 2009). Closely related to racism is the notion of racialisation, put simply as racial categorisation of individuals and groups that legitimises difference among social groups based on perceived biological characteristics, yet it is dynamically and historically situated process (ibid). The way in which VEM-NEST negotiate this process of racialisation is discussed this study.

1.5 Overview of thesis

In this chapter I opened with my personal narrative as a way of introducing the concept of VEM-NEST that was further explored in this thesis. I discussed how the focus of this thesis developed out of my previous research undertaken during my MA studies. From
this introduction I articulated my research aims and research questions, then presented the definitions of key terms used in this thesis.

Chapter Two presents the key conceptual areas of race and its relationship to the native-speaker model used as a frame for teacher identity in TESOL through presenting the historical development of the native-speaker model, and a discussion of how this category came to become structurally embedded in TESOL.

Chapter Three presents my conceptual framework that is informed by Judith Butler’s (1990, 1999) concept of performativity and Sheldon Stryker’s (1980) concept of role identities. This framework is used to explore the relationship between racial identities of VEM-NESTs and the NEST label.

Chapter Four presents the narrative based research approach used in this study, beginning with the rationale for using a narrative based methodology, followed by a detailed research report on the processes undertaken to generate data. This chapter concludes with the process of developing individual restoried narratives for each participant.

Chapter Five presents my analytical framework developed from Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) structural approach and provides a detailed report on the process of analysis undertaken.

Chapter Six presents the findings from analysis of the restoried narratives of the nine participants of this study. They are presented individually with a brief profile summary and the analysis of their individual restoried narratives.

Chapter Seven draws together a summary answer to the research questions, and discusses how the findings challenge existing conceptualisations of teacher identity based on the “native-speaker” model in TESOL.
Chapter Eight brings my thesis to a close, which discusses the contributions of my study, its limitations, the implication of this study and suggestions for further development.
Chapter Two: Development of the VEM-NEST label

2.1 Introduction

This chapter argues that racialised aspects of teacher identities should be considered alongside debates regarding linguistic identities so that a more nuanced understanding of the NS/NNS binary distinction may develop. I will begin from the position that these categories are based on a specific definition of a native-speaker which is used as a model for language learners to emulate. This discussion opens with a review of the key conceptual areas of the native-speaker model from a historical perspective, beginning with a focus on the development of the notion of "Standard English", which gave rise to a linguistic standard across colonised territories. This linguistic standard contributed towards the creation of NS/NNS speaker categories and a subsequent hierarchy that became embedded in the developing TESOL profession. Out of this hierarchy the concept of "native English speaking teacher" (NEST) developed in which racialised divisions between NS/NNS emerged. By way of examples, I will discuss the effects this has had on the education policies of ex-colonised territories of Malaysia and Hong Kong with respect to English language tuition.

From this historical perspective I will turn to examine the theoretical relationship between race and the native-speaker model by drawing upon key arguments of Critical Race Theory. I use the concept of "whiteness" as a structural norm from which the racial category "white" is considered an invisible standard against which all other racial identities are measured. I argue that this racial category is considered the identity norm for “native-speakers” of English partly because the historical associations during the colonial period have carried over to today through associating specific nationalities with "Standard English". These associations are problematic for individuals who do not neatly fit into the generalised binary of NSs and NNSs (“white” and “non-white" respectively). VEM-NESTs pose a unique challenge to this binary of teacher identity because their racial identities go against assumptions of a “native-speaker” identity. I present my working definition of VEM-NESTs to demonstrate how they challenge the criteria used to evaluate who is and who is not a “native-speaker".
This chapter concludes with a discussion highlighting the need for the TESOL profession to discuss how racial aspects of identity are as important as the linguistic aspects. The TESOL profession includes a diverse range of perspectives and understandings of how teacher identities are viewed. In this regard I acknowledge that there exist a variety of ways the NS/NNS binary distinction can be interpreted due to the varying levels of critical awareness of terms such as ‘native-speakerism’ and ‘racism’. This thesis uses the more essentialized views of the NS/NNS binary distinction as a reference point for further discussion.

There is a general reluctance to discuss race related issues in TESOL (see Kubota and Lin (eds.) 2006; Harris and Rampton (eds.) 2003; Curtis and Romney (eds.) 2006) which I argue is due to the limited view of what racism is. In this regard, my view of racism is based on Critical Race Theory, which asserts that racism is not manifested in overt, isolated incidents but is instead considered a normal part of society, rendering racist actions as acceptable because it has become a normal part of everyday experience. Racism, in this light, is very difficult to address and because it is so embedded in the NS/NS binary distinction, racism faced by VEM-NESTs are a further example of what would be considered "acceptable" discriminatory practices within TESOL.

2.2 A historical view of key concepts of the native-speaker model in TESOL

2.2.1 The native-speaker as the basis for NS/NNS binary distinction

In TESOL, professionals largely appear to be categorised in terms of either "native-speaker" (NS), or "non-native speaker" (NNS). These terms are problematic because their meanings are imprecise to begin with yet widely used in English language teaching. These categories have their roots in the continued appeal for using a specific definition of native-speaker as a benchmark to measure linguistic ability and, by extension, professional ability of TESOL practitioners. On the surface, having a benchmark is regarded as a "common sense" view (Davis 2003: 2) due to its practical implications but this rationale is not adequate enough because the common markers for a “native-speaker” are not fit for purpose. On the one hand, there is Halliday’s (1978) notion that
the term "native-speaker" is defined as someone who has learnt a language in childhood, but this definition is questionable because highly proficient users of a language who have learnt a language at a later stage in their lives would not be considered a NS on this basis, regardless of their language ability (Cook 1999). On the other hand, the NNS term emphasises the "non" aspect, implying a deficiency in the language user (Medgyes 1999) whereby highlighting the superior status accorded to “native-speakers” of a language. These labels are closely attributed to competency where the “native-speaker” is defined in relation to mastery of the language and is assumed to have a subconscious and intuitive understanding of the language (Stern 1983). This stance positions the native-speaker as a linguistic model, as Hacker (2012:1) reiterates, “the native speaker intuitions are not only tapped as a data source but also as the final arbiter of the grammaticality and acceptability of particular syntactic structures.” In this light, language learners are regarded as imitators of native-speakers rather than language users in their own right (Cook 1999) because they are considered learners and therefore deficient in competency. The native-speaker model is a dominant approach in EFL, which views “non-native speakers” as linguistically handicapped (Nemtchinova 2005) and this perceived deficiency is extended to their professionalism, as Widdowson (1994: 387) argues,

“Native-speaker expertise is assumed to extend to the teaching of the language. They not only have a patent on proper English, but on proper ways of teaching it as well.”

This notion has influenced sociolinguistic areas such as language policy and minority speech rights (e.g., Phillipson 1992) despite the methodological focus on “native-speakers” being authentic providers of language (e.g., Braine 1999; Medgyes 1999). Yet, competency in a language with its associations to teaching ability remains a key feature in defining the NS/NNS labels.

2.2.2 The emergence of English as a language

The native-speaker model of the NS/NNS binary has its roots in the historical development of English as a language and the subsequent spread of English language teaching. Attempts to harmonise English were widely regarded as a pragmatic choice given the lack of a universal grammar system during the sixteenth century. According to
Finegan (1992, in Scott and Machan) variety of English that eventually became considered the standard was identified as a historical accident due to the royal court and printing presses being located in London. As developments increased in technical areas such as medicine, life sciences and philosophy, so did the use of English, which began to replace Latin in these fields (ibid).

Moreover the use of English in daily interactions of the merchant class increased the use of the language across the social classes, which created a genuine fear that, without any sort of regulation subsequent generations of English speakers would be unable to understand one another, let alone read and write the language. The development of two-way phrasebooks, or "double manuals" (Howatt and Widdowson 2004:12) launched the creation of a more easily accessible system of English grammar in which the first documented attempt did not appear until the sixteenth century (Turner 1980). The mercantile community were using the double manuals when the demand for the English language rose because of the increase in trade between the French and the English. These double manuals, produced on the continent, gave rise to teaching manuals, of which the earliest known copy was created in 1553 (ibid). In subsequent centuries the teaching manuals became the basis for textbooks which language teachers used in the development of an early English language curriculum.

With the harmonisation of a "common English language" that eventually became referred to as "Standard English", the question of ownership was inevitable. One of the issues that arose from discussions regarding language teaching pedagogy was the question of what type of English should be taught. Hackert (2012), in her historical review of the English “native-speaker”, traces the use of the word "native" as early as 1850, which she cites from the Oxford English Dictionary being used by George Perkins Marsh in an address at Columbia College, New York in 1859. She notes that further isolated uses, in combination with other related terms suggest that the latter half of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a period in which people started to view language and their speakers quite differently (ibid, p.31). The installation of British colonial rule during the nineteenth century saw the establishment of forms of British educational systems in the local populace and the introduction of the English language to the colonised territories.
2.2.3 The spread of the English language to colonised territories

The value judgements placed on the different Englishes in existence have historical roots, particularly during the two diasporas of English. The first diaspora involved migrations of substantial numbers of English speakers from the British Isles to Australia, New Zealand, and North America, essentially bringing monolingual English speakers to new locations, whereas the second diaspora occurred in the colonial contexts of Asia and Africa, which entailed the transportation of language and, to a lesser extent, the transportation of people (Kachru 1996, in McKay and Hornberger, eds.; Jenkins 2009). This is a general view of what was otherwise a complex issue regarding the rise of English as a foreign language, the emergence of English as an lingua franca and English as an international language. The early seventeenth century saw large-scale migrations of English speakers from the British Isles to North America, Australia and New Zealand. In these new localities the varieties of English spoken was eventually adopted into the recognisable forms of today, which had developed over time to adopt a considerable amount of the vocabulary from the indigenous populations (Jenkins 2009: 5). In the wake of establishing independence from British rule, a growing sense of being able to develop a separate English speaking identity emerged. According to Strevens (1992), in these former British colonies, beginning with the United States and then emerging elsewhere, independence helped to reinforce the degree of linguistic difference (p. 29) and maintain their respective varieties of English just as "standard".

In contrast, the second diaspora during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries occurred very differently. This movement saw less numerous migrations to various colonised areas of Africa and Asia where English was seen as a lingua franca, but not necessarily always recognised as an official language. For example, in different areas of Africa English played a major role in government, education and law as British colonies sought to establish their presence. Furthermore, India is a prime example of where English is one of the two official languages due to the length of colonial rule. However, the subsequent colonisation of Asia, including South East Asia, and the South Pacific, saw the
establishment of the English language through the educational systems managed under colonial rule rather than via the presence of a large population of colonisers.

2.2.4 The development of NS/NNS distinction from "Standard English"

The spread of English to colonised territories has influenced the way in which the ownership of English is regarded. In this respect I turn to Kachru’s (in Crystal 1997:54) visual representation of three concentric circles which serves as a useful depiction of how different varieties of English are divided.

![Figure 3.1: Kachru's Concentric Circles of English](image)

The Inner Circle countries consist largely of the US and UK who provide what is termed “norm-providing” varieties of English (ibid, p. 16). From this view, an idealised notion of “Standard English” arose that developed from various assumptions made of the rules and norms that ought to be adhered to (Medgyes 1999: 7). In contrast, Expanding Circle and Outer Circle countries are considered “norm-dependent” because they look to Inner Circle countries as the source of English language, English “culture” and English language teachers.

Despite Kachru’s limited account for the dynamic use of English across the three circles (Park and Wee 2009), his model serves as a useful starting point. In addition, Crystal (1997) breaks down Kachru's distinction into number of speakers, citing (at the time, 1998) that NNS were more numerous than NSs. Interestingly, his predictions for the 21st
century have been consistent, with the majority of NNS continuing to outnumber NSs (Davis 2003). This point is made to illustrate the imbalance of power, where the Inner Circle countries continue to be regarded as the source and model of the English language and ELT methodologies. There remains the dependency of using "Standard English" as the central reference point from which other varieties are judged, in particular, pronunciation, where any deviation at any level from the native norm would be considered an error (Kachru 1988). Students historically aimed to acquire the correct pronunciation of the target language. However, the variable aspects of proficiency (Davies 2003) or expertise (Rampton 1990) ought to be related to a separate issue of quality rather than being defining characteristics of the “native-speaker”.

Over time there emerged a need to protect "Standard English" from change so that it could be used as an evaluative tool, as Widdowson (2003: 309) argues,

So when the custodians of Standard English complain about the ungrammatical usage of the populace, they are in effect indicating that the perpetrators are outsiders, non-members of the community, and bent perhaps on undermining it. The only way they can become members, and so benefit from the privileges of membership, is to learn Standard English, and these privileges include, of course, access to the institutions which the community controls.

Born out of the desire to maintain a particular variety of English as a model, the binary distinction of NSs and NNSs became the marker under which speakers were labelled, creating a hierarchy that placed NSs in a more privileged position than NNS. In this view, the goal to "become a NS" (e.g. sound like one, speak like one) is underpinned with issues of power, where the language learner works towards acquiring the economic and political benefits from being labelled as a NS through focussing their efforts on becoming one. This particular view can only exist in a system that is geared towards a native-speaker model that upholds an ideology known as "native-speakerism", which I turn to in the next section.

2.3 A historical view of the development of racialised ELT identities

2.3.1 Native-speakerism

There is a growing amount of literature on NSs and NNSs issues that not only raise awareness of the implications these categories have for English language professionals
but also focus on the underlying politics behind these labels. More recent works discuss the effects of the globalisation on ELT (e.g. Pennycook, 1994; Canagarajah 2002; Grimshaw 2007), the relationship between English and "culture" (e.g. Holliday 1997; Kubota 1999; Kumaravadivelu 1993) and the continuing dominance of the notion of "Standard English" (e.g. Widdowson 1994; Medgyes 1992; Brutt-Griffler and Samimy 2001).

Behind these discussions is the recognition of an unequal distribution of power maintained through an ideology that Holliday (2005:6) has termed "native-speakerism". He argues that the term "native-speaker of English" is taken to mean "native-speaker from the English speaking West" illustrating the underlying assumption that the NS category is historically tied to specific locations, maintained through a professional culture "characterised as having an overactive professional zeal connected with the notion that English and English teaching is originally theirs" (ibid, p. 3). Linking back to the desire within applied linguistics for a linguistic benchmark, the standardisation of English as a language is associated with maintaining a standard of English language teaching, and by extension, the view for an ideal English language teacher (Medgyes 1994; Leung et al, 1997; Nemtchinova, 2005).

The native-speakerism ideology has come under scrutiny and an increasing amount of research undertaken by scholars outside "the West" is emerging (see the collections edited by Houghton and Rivers 2013; Rapatahana and Bunce, 2012), which provide alternative views to Inner Circle ELT literature because the research studies were undertaken by NNS in countries considered to be in the periphery. This small but growing research contribution provides insight into the experiences of those on the receiving end of neo-colonial English language policies and practices. For example, Aquino (2012) examines the relationship between the use of English as one of the two official languages recognised in the Philippine constitution and the continuing colonial influence this has had on the development of the nation itself. She argues that the official status of English, as well-intentioned as it may be, has had a detrimental effect on how Filipinos view their own languages. This view is at the heart of the difficulties Filipinos faces when attempting to reconcile their identities as an independent nation.
In this study, the term "native English speaking teacher" (NEST) is defined as someone who considers themself to be a NS. This was a deliberate move to allow this term to be defined by the participants on their own terms. What is remarkable is that each of these participants considers themselves a NEST, but as presented in Chapter Six, the profiles of the participants further illustrate the range of definitions that challenge the narrow view of who is and who is not a native-speaker in ways that do not necessarily align with the belief that one needs to be born in an Inner Circle country or have English as their L1.

2.3.2 Historical associations of NEST and whiteness

The processes that developed the varieties of Englishes in use today are argued to have been influenced by the type of colony a nation became (Mufwene 2001 in Kirkpatrick 2007). In former British colonies, English language tuition was used to primarily administer the area by enabling members of the local population, usually from the wealthy sectors of society, to become translators for British government officials (Howatt 2004). This provided the incentive for the local wealthy population to maintain the class divisions because of the social and economic privileges attained through working with the occupying government (see Eoyang et al 2012; Hackert 2012). However, control of the population was not only through the creation of jobs but was further established through changing the local educational systems (Kirkpatrick 2007). This form of control exerted by the British was more nuanced in order to maintain their influence because it was not done by force, but through learning, as van Dijk (2000: 74) argues, “If minds are controlled by discourse, control over discourse is an important, though indirect, condition for mind control...This power is subtly exercised in many forms of every social practices, and in text and talk in particular.” Establishing English language tuition in colonised territories allowed change to come from within, beginning with the educational systems and, from there, moving outwards into broader society. This subtlety of control was of ideological dominance rather than one of force that systematically reinforced hierarchies and established new ones. One example of the subtlety of control was the exclusive use of “native-speakers” as English language teachers. This ensured that the teaching of English was controlled in a top-down system whereby the local students were positioned as recipients of knowledge. Not only did this reinforce existing economic hierarchies but
also spawned the creation of an industry of specialised schools with English as the medium of instruction (Kirkpatrick 2007) and then later English language schools. The establishment of a British based education system coupled with the teaching of English language made available to those who could afford the fees, the power difference between the local population and the colonisers became more pronounced as control became embedded within local society (see the collections edited by Raptahana and Bunce 2012 for examples of case studies).

The teaching of English in the colonised territories relied heavily on “native-speakers” who were, by and large, British missionaries and foreign merchants (see Howatt 2004). The roles English took on in these Expanding Circle countries was varied because it was a language imported from abroad and thus, the use of foreigners to teach English was originally born out of necessity (Mufwene 2001 in Kirkpatrick 2007). Thus historically, the racial identities of foreign native English teachers would have been white British. What is problematic is that these historical associations of racial identities have become the assumed racial identities for “native-speakers” of English, particularly those that hail from Inner countries (see Amin 1997).

This viewpoint is argued to be reflected in various ELT hiring practices where the ability to effectively teach English is ascribed to “native-speakers” of Inner Circle countries. It has been acknowledged that NS identity is associated with a white racial identity but how this association originated is the subject of on-going discussion. One of the reoccurring themes relates to the development of hegemonic ideologies of language and its relationship to race and social class during the colonial expansions first by the British Empire and later by the United States. Pennycook (1998) contends that the use of English in educational and political systems mainly served the interests of the elites as a language of inclusion for the few, and of exclusion for the many, setting up a system for linguistic imperialism to take hold and flourish. However, the domination of English language cannot be easily described as merely a simplistic, top-down, imposition process by quasi-colonial organisations because the complexities are related to the various Englishes that can be found in the world today (Rapatahana 2012).
2.3.3 The historical legacy of English-medium education systems in former British colonies

The prevailing NS model has had a major influence on how the ELT industry has developed around the world and has left a legacy on the historical development of language policies in former colonies and influenced the racialised identity expectations of NEST in TESOL. English language teaching outside of Europe developed over time through the establishment of a British based educational system (see Howatt and Widdowson 2004; Hackert 2012) where it is argued that the development of the industry was more concerned about exerting political influence through the teaching of English rather than via the emergence of language teaching theories (see Kachru 1988; Phillipson 1992, 2007).

There are several examples within former British colonies where English was used as a way of influencing political and economic control. Macaulay’s Minute on Indian Education, an often quoted report from 1835, is famous for the discriminatory stance against Indian education in the vernacular (Macaulay 1835) yet is a clearly worded assertion of using English as a means of control via education. However, Pennycook (1994) argues that Macaulay’s Minute was but one example of the complex role languages played at the time. On one hand, an English based education would have provided locals the skills necessary for white-collar jobs in various administrative roles within the public sector. However, these types of jobs were limited and there was a reluctance to provide English language tuition for fear of creating an educated population not content with manual labour. For example, the Bengali middle classes during the 1800s sought access to the economic and political power made available through the study of English within a "western" based educational system. As such, the study of English became associated with the potential for upward economic mobility, creating a demand. This situation was also replicated in Malaya (modern day Malaysia) where it was not so much the spread of English that was of concern to the British ruling class, but the social, economic and political prestige that it afforded those who were fortunate enough to be educated in English because it created a new, educated middle class that may not be as easily managed as their fellow, non-English speaking, citizens.
However, Pennycook (1994) notes “What is immediately worth observing here is that it was not so much that British policy actively pursued the expansion of English, but rather that the local elites demanded it because of its links to social and economic prestige” (p. 76). English soon developed an association to success and better life prospects for those able to speak the language by the local population, much to the advantage of the British colonisers. This demand was met with the establishment of British based education systems which inadvertently embedded colonial influence within the colonised territories. As was the situation in Malaya, Hong Kong was a British colony that had an education system which provided an English-medium education that was seen as a gateway to greater economic and social opportunities. What is more, an English-medium education was provided through the establishment of English medium schools that offered a "western style" educational model. During the nineteenth century the British ruling class established a western model of education that initially focused on providing a systematic and modernised approach, and included English language lessons. In the early days under British rule (from 1840) schools were mostly set up by missionaries but it was not until 1862 through the work of Frederick Stewart, the Colonial Secretary to Hong Kong, that the initial foundations of the educational system were established through a government decree “Regulations for the Better Administration of the Government Schools” (Sweeting 1990: 151).

The focus on learning English increased in the curriculum over the years until the establishment of English Medium Schools which used a “western" educational model. Law Wing-San (2009) argues this move was a deliberate, class focused partnership between a small, local Chinese elite and the colonial British government, where it was in the best interests of the British-educated local elite population to maintain this two-tiered system. What emerged from this distinction was the public view that the acquisition of English could only be achieved by studying in an educational institution established by the British. This placed any institutions that were taught in the vernacular (in the case of Hong Kong, Cantonese) as second class since most did not offer a "western-style, English medium" curriculum and therefore assumed would not be able to provide a gateway to greater social, political and economic prestige. This view assumes
the local educational system, with an established "local" curriculum, as second-rate in the eyes of concerned parents and students who aspired for better opportunities.

The establishment of English-medium schools in former British colonies is tied to the development of standardising the type of teachers and the type of English used in these "western" education providers. For example, by 1929 the English language was firmly established in business and administration in Malaysia, but nevertheless restricted to a small elite section of society (Pennycook 1994). The establishment of colonial education and language policies were to have major effect on life in Malaysia in which English became a marker of class for those who could afford to educate their children in these schools. In comparison, Chinese Medium of Instruction (CMI)² schools were regarded as somehow inferior, resulting in CMI students and teachers rightly resenting this view. This effect is echoed in Hong Kong where Eoyang et al. (2012) discuss the local community’s attitudes towards the English language and its effects on the current educational system in the post - 1998 "return" to China. Their report traces the effects of implementing a similar Native English Teachers Scheme (NETs) into the Hong Kong public education system, and the effect this has had on creating a two-tiered system that the local population reluctantly works with (Hopkins 2006). Reflected in this system is the reliance of NS model of ELT, as Eoyang et al. identifies “The British administration had never demanded a switch to Cantonese before 1998. They merely recommended it on occasions and had noted, consistently, that mixed-code teaching was pedagogically unsatisfactory whilst deliberately enabling an elite indigenous population to learn English” (2012: 143). This two-tiered system was also a product of internal demands, which inadvertently strengthened the subtle policies originally implemented under British rule despite the 1998 departure of a British political presence. Furthermore, the demand for English medium schools (EMI) over Cantonese medium schools (CMI) has increased in the ensuing years when government attempts to switch to CMI were met with astounding opposition. In other words, Hong Kong residents were selectively appropriating the Western culture and values, while benefiting from the economic and social rewards from English education (Canagarajah 1999: 65).

² Chinese Medium Schools were set up post 1998 in various areas of Hong Kong to provide Mandarin-medium educational institutions, creating a linguistic presence of the new ruling party in the area. It was strategic political move to influence the educational system but resulting in hierarchical system, with English coming out on top.
2.4 Theorising race and the native-speaker model

The next section explores the relationship between race and the native-speaker model by drawing upon key arguments of Critical Race Theory (CRT). This section focuses on the issues that relate to current discussions regarding race in TESOL. I have found CRT useful in my research therefore, in the following sections I will first present the main areas of contention that CRT seeks to address and then discuss its relevance to this thesis.

2.4.1 Overview of Critical Race Theory

Beginning around the mid-1970s, CRT was a movement that developed out the American legal system which aimed to examine the foundations of how society organises itself along racial hierarchies, and then challenge these foundations in order to transform society for the better (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). This movement has its roots in the early work of Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman, both of whom were deeply distressed over the slow pace of racial reform in the United States. They observed that advances of the civil rights era during the 1960s were not being realised several decades on, and therefore new theories and strategies were needed to combat the subtler forms of racism that were being enacted (Ladson-Billings 1998: 10). Derrick Bell is attributed as the founder of CRT where his landmark paper criticising the ruling of Brown vs. The Board of Education brought forth the radical notion that the American legal system is inherently racist because the ruling that ended segregated schools was not done for the benefit of the people but for the benefit of the system. Bell argues that the ruling resulted from the self-interests of elite whites rather than a desire to help blacks in what he (1995: 22) termed “interest convergence”, defined as “The interest of blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of whites.” This controversial critique brought the US legal system under scrutiny and this focus on critically evaluating definitions of racism enabled CRT to be expanded to different fields such as education.

2.4.2 "Whiteness" and the assumed racial identity of native-speakers of English

CRT seeks to challenge the notion of “whiteness” as the standard from which the notions of colour-blindness and racism as individual acts are derived. Bearing in mind the
historical influences that slavery has had on the conceptions of race in the United States, the concept of whiteness is referred to as “a system and ideology of white dominance that marginalises and oppresses people of colour, ensuring existing privileges for white people” (McIntyre 1997: 3). Tied to this notion is the concept of white privilege that defines it as a social norm, enforced by the belief that white is not regarded as a race per se but rather, just simply, people (Delgado and Stefancic 2009). By not recognising white as a race enables members to dismiss or minimise the importance of racial identity while denying that they have benefited from their racial positioning. Moreover members can rely on their white privilege to choose whether to challenge racism or ignore its existence (Liggett 2009: 35).

In contrast, other races are defined in opposition to whiteness, reflected in the term "non-white" (Delgado and Stefancic 2009), where definitions are implicitly based on a deficit-model. With whiteness as an invisible social norm, positive aspects of character and morality are attributed to social norms and, inadvertently, whiteness (ibid). "Non-white", conversely, are defined in terms of how closely they align with social norms because the norms are not considered as part of non-white characteristics. In this view, a colour-blind society would allow for equality where the same opportunities are available to those who are able and willing to take them up. This view is well intentioned, but fundamentally flawed because it blinds others to the meaningful differences that exist between groups (Sue 2004; Winant 1997) and assumes that everyone, regardless of their origins, has an equal chance of success. Moreover it falls on the individual to achieve success and well-being through the social structures that are assumed to operate on an impartial basis. It is a formidable and pervasive ideology where many believe that discrimination has been minimised or even eliminated (Jones 1997; Frankenberg 1993) effectively discouraging wider discussions regarding race and leaving institutional racism unchallenged.

The overarching premise is that historically English was used as a management tool for colonised territories that reflected the relationship between the English language and race because it divided speakers in inequitable ways. This division is currently reflected in
the NS/NNS binary distinction that categorises English language teachers according to linguistic criteria associated with Inner Circle countries and, I argue, racial criterion that also has been historically associated with Inner Circle countries (Kubota and Lin 2008). Furthermore it may be argued that "white" became the racial identity norm for native-speakers of English through the historical spread of English language teaching during the colonial period (Pennycook 1998; Hackert 2012). White, British “native-speakers” of English, by virtue of their position as the colonisers were considered the source of English as a linguistic model and teaching pedagogy. The colonized, "non-white" population, were positioned as learners of English and categorised as non-native speaker in addition to being considered reliant on white native speaker for their English language education (Howatt 2004).

Building upon the notion of "whiteness" proposed by CRT, the native-speaker of English remains the linguistic standard with an implicit racial standard of "white" in which positive associations such as competency and professionalism are attributed to white native-speakers of English. Conversely, non-native/"non-white" speakers of English work on a deficit model where their linguistic competency and characteristics associated with their racial identities are measured against criteria associated with white native-speakers. In this light, black native-speakers of English would not be considered on equal terms as white native-speakers, because black native-speakers do not necessarily match the assumed native-speaker racial identity. Moreover, black “non-native speakers” of English would be even further down the list because they do not meet the assumed linguistic and racial identities expected of a "real" native speaker. However, I find that this is a simplistic description of NS/NNS binary distinction because it bluntly divides individuals into one category or the other based on reductionist views of NSs, NNSs, white, "non-white". What is problematic is that this remains the prevailing criterion used to categorise and ultimately place value on TESOL professionals. This is not to say that individuals are restricted to identifying with either NS/NNS, but rather this binary distinction ought to serve as a reference point for negotiating identities that go beyond these two labels.
2.4.3 VEM-NEST identities as counter-stories to the NS/NNS binary distinction

Against the backdrop of the concepts outlined above, there is a tendency for particular voices to be heard because they conform to the widely used definitions of NS/NNS identities. In CRT, whiteness is considered as the normative set of stories that are told and thus more widely accepted at the expense of other viewpoints in US legal proceedings. In TESOL, the combination of whiteness, native-speakerism, and the colonial history of ELT form a well established frame that allow voices from the Inner Circle countries to be listened to over others. However, CRT rejects the automatic focus on "whiteness" as the normative centre, and instead foregrounds the experiences and voices of people of colour. Following on this concept of CRT (Delgado and Stefancic 2009) I propose to reject both "whiteness" and the native-speaker as the normative centre used as a frame for defining TESOL teacher identities. This view is recognised as counter storytelling (Delgado and Stefancic 2001), a technique utilised in US law to provide alternative views on racist and discriminatory practices. My thesis uses a narrative based approach where the collection of stories is a small sample of an underrepresented group of TESOL professionals. In the spirit of CRT, my thesis presents the stories of VEM-NESTs as counter stories that challenge the inclusive veneer of TESOL (Kubota 2001; Holliday 2005) through problematising the assumptions made of NS/NNS identities. I have found CRT useful in theorising race and racism and it has allowed me to better understand the underlying forces that affects the ways in which VEM-NEST are perceived.

2.5 Further discussion on race and racism needed in TESOL

2.5.1 Limited conceptualisation of race in TESOL

There is a growing area of research exploring the prevalence of native-speakerism in TESOL but a limited amount of discussion exploring the link between race and NS/NNS identities. While the native speaker remains a central concept in modern linguistic thought, the conceptualisation of race remains to be fully developed. The reluctance to engage with race related issues is due in part to the generalised impression of English language teaching being the most inclusive, open and liberal of educational sectors since there is a large degree of interaction between and among individuals from different cultures and backgrounds (Holliday 2006).
NS and NNS are largely defined on a linguistic basis however there have been more recent discussion on how race is an additional feature of this binary definition (e.g. Kubota and Lin (eds.), 2006; Harris and Rampton (eds.) 2003; Clark, 2013). Currently the NS/NNS binary distinction serves as an overarching way of categorising ELT professionals but in doing so, does not account for the possibility of different variations that exist within these two categories. Acknowledging the existence of sub-categories within the NS/NNS binary is a way of problematising the foundations on which they were founded and maintained. Visible ethnic minorities who consider themselves “native-speakers” of English (VEM-NESTs) are an example of a sub-category of NSs from which this thesis aims to draw different concepts as a way of problematising the NS/NNS binary. I presented my story as a prologue to my thesis and as a way of introducing the area of racial identity by highlighting its importance as a critical feature to NS/NNS identities that needs to be addressed. It is the elephant in the ELT room, so to speak, where the experiences of VEM-NESTs, and conversely white-NNESTs, are not easily accounted for in the NS/NNS binary. Part of my research position is informed by the tenents of Critical Race Theory (CRT) where more recent literature (e.g. Ruecker 2011) has called for researchers to utilise research from CRT as a method of analysing and deconstructing the issues regarding “native/non-native speakers” and race. These concepts are discussed in the next section.

2.5.2 CRT and alternative views of racism in TESOL

One of the fundamental assumptions that CRT critiques is that racism is an irregularity that occurs in society. Underlying this position is the notion of integrationism, the belief that in an ideal society racial categories will be a thing of the past. In this view racism is considered to be rooted in the consciousness of individuals where prejudice is regarded as a form of irrational thinking, as Peller asserts (1995:127) “the opposite of racism is knowledge - knowledge gleaned from actual interracial experience rather than mythologies of stereotypes.” Racism is equated with irrational bias and therefore the removal of bias through reason via integration between races is argued to facilitate a race neutral society where racial identity is not important (ibid). In line with the integrationist view, when race is removed from society then racism would cease to occur, whereby the view that one does not "see race" is a worthy goal (ibid). Moreover, from an
integrationist stance, social institutions, such as law and education, are considered neutral and objective because racism, in this view, remains purely a cognitive issue (Delgado and Stefanic 2001).

CRT argues against the irregularity of racism and considers it as a normal aspect of life because racism exists in subtle forms that are not recognised as racist because it has become engrained in our everyday experience. As long as racism is seen as abnormal to society, racial discrimination is only ever considered in overt forms of prejudice and personal discrimination (Kubota and Lin, 2009). Freeman (1995:30) argues that in US law racial discrimination is viewed not as a social phenomenon but merely as misguided conduct of particular individuals. Thus, CRT argues that these social structures in effect treat people of colour differently.

Several authors have attempted to address the lack of theorisation in the area of race and TESOL (e.g. Kubota and Lin (eds.), 2007; Harris and Rampton (eds.) 2003; Clark 2013). In this limited, yet emerging area of research is a need for further exploration in order to recognise the existence of racism in TESOL, let alone begin to address it. In Kubota’s eloquent reply to criticism of her discussion of race, she argues that racism does exist and is woven into the fabric of our institutions, and it is through engagement with this area that "the invisible can be made visible" (2002:90). This seemingly obvious acknowledgement is the site of resistance in opening up discussions into race and TESOL. Holliday (2005:2) identifies that one of the contributing factors lies in "the inclusive We", where despite the diversity and differences, “we share the idea of a common, international professional-academic identity” and thus racist situations are regarded as isolated incidents instead of being recognised as part of this "We". In this vein, there remains a continued denial of the reality of racism in TESOL because it challenges the perception of a seemingly inclusive and accommodating field (Kubota and Lin 2006).

2.5.3 The construction of racism is a "normal" part of society

If racism is seen as isolated events in society, then the effects of racism are perceived to be limited to individuals, such as the perpetrator and the victim in the eyes of the law. Furthermore those who benefit from racism, intentionally or unintentionally, become
hidden. CRT proposes that racism advances the interests of both white elites (materially) and working-class people (psychologically), whereby large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate it (Delgado and Stefancic 2001: 7). According to Bonilla-Silva (2004) this has resulted in a tri-racial system that redefines the United States black/white racial divide into one comprised of “Whites”, “Honorary Whites” and the Collective Blacks who occupy various positions within a racialised system. Whites occupy the highest status where “Honorary Whites” are located in the middle, below “Whites” but above the “Collective Black”. Bonilla-Silva argues that “Honorary Whites” serve as a buffer zone where they may be given enough privileges to boost their status but not enough to allow them to be considered equal to “Whites” (ibid). Therefore “Honorary Whites” enjoy a higher social status and are argued to have little incentive to challenge racism within the very system that they benefit from. As Grant and Lee (2009) contend, the emergence of the Honorary White group as a buffer zone is the result of “White” elite’s strategies to "whiten" their population and preserve racial power. The most forthcoming description of this policy can be found in Lord Thomas Macaulay’s famous 1835 Minute on Indian Education, who argued that English should be used to create a new Indian class that would be imbued with an English mentality in order to help the British effectively govern India. He argued they would more or less stand as a buffer zone between the British and the governed people. Racially, Indian English-speakers would remain below the white ruling class yet would be afforded economic and social mobility not made available to the majority of the Indian population.

Bonilla-Silva’s redefinition of the United States racial systems is not easily applied to the field of English language teaching. However, the notion of compliance for benefit is an interesting consideration. Grant and Lee (2009:45) contend that “the political economy of language pivots around commodification and global capitalism” where, according to Kumaravadivelu (2006:12), language takes on a colonial coloration when it is used as a tool to serve the causes of the (English) Empire. In English language teaching, the position of the ownership of English and English language teaching methodology by the English-speaking West (Holliday, 2006) are strongly positioned to influence the industry in order to reap the most benefits. The economic dimension of English adds jobs and wealth to the economy of English-speaking countries throughout a worldwide ELT industry (see
Kumaravadivelu 2003) which in turn, serves the interests of English-speaking countries as well as “native-speakers” and native-speaking professionals. This is to say the English language has come to represent capital power and symbolise a kind of dividing rod of class and racial disparity (Grant and Lee 2009) that sets the English-speaking West in dominant positions compared to the rest of the world. With its associations with the global economy, English is deemed to be the “natural choice for progress” (Crystal 1998:78). While obvious forms of colonialism, such as territorial occupation, will not go unchallenged, English as a global language will continue to serve the communicational needs as along with the propaganda purposes of both globalisation and the (BANA) empire (Kumaravadivelu 2003). The on-going debates regarding the role of English in language policies around the world are examples where resistance towards adopting "non-BANA English / teaching methodologies" occurs, because of the belief that in a country's economic interest to adopt a particular type of English in their education systems (see Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (eds.) 1995, Eoyang et al., 2012). The debates challenge the assumptions that place NNESTs in a disadvantaged position to NESTs.

The notion of racism as independent occurrences in society contributes to a generalised, homogeneous view of racism, which assumes that there is one type of racism that can be applied to all racialised groups. In this view, the effects of racism are assumed to be equally distributed across different segments of society because it is seen as a cognitive issue and therefore attempts to address racism are generalised. To reiterate, racism is considered a cognitive issue applicable to individuals who are held responsible and therefore well-intentioned but overly simplistic solutions, such as education and further exposure to other races, is seen as key to addressing racism. CRT argues there is a need to recognise that different kinds of racisms exist (Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Liggert 2009) so that more diverse understandings of racialised groups can be generated. This would be a step towards challenging stereotypical views of racialised groups because racism affects groups differently. Furthermore Kubota and Lin (2009:6) assert that there is a need to recognise the different types of racism that occur in different areas of society in order to better understand how they shape social relations, practices and institutional structures.
In a broader sense, Scheurich (1997) identifies an epistemological racism that privileges European modernist white civilisation (Kubota 2002) and is reflected in ELT textbooks that subtly construct and perpetuate racist stereotypes and hegemony of whiteness stemming from Western imperialism (Kubota and Lin 2009:7) where the authorship, production and management of content remains centralised in English-speaking countries (Kumaravadivelu 2006). Further research into the different types of racism depicted in ELT textbooks is vital because ELT textbooks continue to be used as a cultural carrier, treating Western cultural practices as the communicative norm across the globe (ibid, pp. 19). Extending an integrationist view even further, if the concept of race does not exist then all individuals would be considered equal. Racism, when it occurs, continues to be regarded as an isolated incident, put down irrationality by the perpetrator towards the victim. Therefore in this view, social and political institutions are unaffected by racism and cannot be racist, thus being able to view every member of society with equal measure.

2.6 Conclusion to Chapter Two

In this chapter I have taken a historical approach to explore the development of the native-speaker model to illustrate how the NS/NNS binary distinction is defined and how this binary affects way NEST/NNESTs are perceived. I began with a historical overview of the development of the notion of "Standard English", which gave rise to a linguistic standard across colonised territories and how this notion contributed towards the creation of NS/NNS speaker categories and a subsequent linguistic and racial hierarchies that became embedded in the developing TESOL profession.

From this historical perspective I examined the theoretical relationship between race and the native-speaker model by drawing upon key arguments of Critical Race Theory. I argued that the white racial category is considered the identity norm for “native-speakers” of English partly because the historical associations during the colonial period have carried over to today through associating specific nationalities with "Standard English".
I drew this chapter to a close by highlighting the relative lack of discussion regarding racism in TESOL and the need for a more nuanced definition of racism as a way of viewing racism embedded in the field of TESOL rather than currently being regarded as independent, isolated incidents. The next chapter focuses on the conceptual framework used to explore the identities of VEM-NESTs.
Chapter Three: Performed role identities in narrative

3.1 Overview of chapter

In this chapter I draw on the work of Judith Butler (1990, 1999) and Sheldon Stryker (1980) to present my concept of performed role identities in narrative. Performed role identities is my view of how specific identities are performed during specific situations. Butler’s emphasis on performativity is especially useful to my analysis because it allows me to think through the ways in which language is an active element in shaping identity. Performativity is a concept used to explain how meaning is developed and regulated through language so that aspects of identity (e.g. gender and race) are affected. To this end, Stryker’s (1980) conceptualisation of “role identities” is generative for understanding when and how individuals take on specific identities in specific situations.

For this thesis I focused on performed role identities as presented in a narrative mode. Narratives are a meaning-making processes that enable individuals to make sense of lived experiences. The data consists of stories of experiences, generated by the participants for the purpose of this study, and their stories present the different ways they performed role identities during specific situations. Understanding how the participants performed their role identities during their stories contributes to the conceptualisation of VEM-NEST teacher identities.

This chapter begins with defining performativity within the view that language constitutes reality and the way in which language brings about meanings that regulate the individual. The concept of role identities is then introduced as a way of thinking about how identity operates in society. Then the relationship between performativity and role identities is presented. Lastly narrative, as a meaning-making process, is discussed in relation to its relevance to performed role identities. The chapter closes with a summary of the key points of this conceptual framework.

3.2 Performativity as a constructive aspect of language

Performativity is based on the view that language simultaneously reflects and constructs reality in a reciprocal manner (Gee 1999) in which words that are about the world, form
the world (Wetherell 2001). Language is considered an active element in shaping reality rather than existing separately as a decontextualized system of signs (e.g. Saussure 1974). This reciprocal process of reflecting and constructing reality can be understood through the concept of performativity. J.L. Austin (et al. 1975), widely regarded as the originator of performativity, challenged the view that the main purpose of language was to impart information in a way that is either true or false (p.1). Utterances deemed “false” were regarded as “failed statements” (ibid) because they did not describe the state of the world and were disregarded as unimportant. However, Austin (et al 1975) argued that this category of “failed statements” still accomplishes something, and that something became the basis of his notion of performativity.

Austin broadly defines performativity as the ways in which language performs the actions to which they refer. To this end he makes the distinction between constative utterances, or statements what describe “truly or falsely” the state of the world, and performative utterances, or statements that perform “successfully or unsuccessfully” the act to which they refer to. For example, the utterance “I promise to pay you back for the coffee today” is not only a description but also accomplishes an act of promising. If to speak is to act, or to utter is to perform then the above example is judged on the basis of success or failure of the act to which it refers (Mirón and Inda 2000:88). This distinction between constative and performative utterances is significant because it shows that language performs actions rather than simply describing them. While this distinction is part of a more complex view of how language constitutes reality, Austin’s definition has influenced the way in which performativity is theorised and, in particular, Butler’s theory of performativity.

3.2.1 *Performativity of language and development of gender norms*

Butler views performativity as a kind of speech act in which language is simultaneously representative and causative of reality. In this sense the speaker is seen as talking in ways that brings about their utterances. For Butler, whose primary focus is gender, the speaker is seen as talking in ways that renders them “male” or “female”, speaking in ways that bring about a gendered identity. Building upon Austin’s view, Butler proposes the speaker uses language that is descriptive of their gender identity and, at the same time, the
meaning of the language used takes action upon the speaker to render them a gender identity. Performativity then affects the meaning of the language used in addition to the speaker themselves, their identities and their social worlds. The way in which meaning becomes recognised is through the development of norms that govern the ways in which language, and consequently the subject, is enacted.

Butler’s theory focuses on how people use linguistic resources to produce gender differentiation which brings to light the norms that define the kinds of language that are possible, and recognisable, for performing masculinity and femininity (Johnson and Meinholf 1997:49). Butler frames performativity in relation to sex and gender as outlined in her seminal book Gender Trouble (1990, 1999). Her work posits sex and gender as separate concepts whereby, in attempting to deconstruct Beauvoir’s famous statement, “one is not born, but rather becomes a woman”, Butler takes the position that gender is an unnatural cultural construction that occurs in a culture which makes it impossible to be without gender (Salih ed. 2004:21). As individuals exist within a gender binary they perform their gender identities in ways that enable them to be recognised as either “male” or “female” as long as their identity performances remain within the constraints of the binary frame. Performing gender within the gender binary normalises the performance and, in turn, the gender binary. According to Butler “gender is the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a ridged regulatory frame which congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a "natural" kind of being” (Butler 1999:32). The “naturalness” of a gender binary is the result from repeated performances over time and gives rise to the limits in which masculine and feminine identities can be performed.

Butler argues that sex is not the causal result of gender, but instead gender is a cultural construction which the individual, who is being gendered, can negotiate what gender is, irregardless of their sex. Gender norms have a long history in which gender identity begins at the moment of birth because one’s sex is equated with one’s gender (Butler 1999:8). The individual, by virtue of their sex, has been gendered and what follows are certain expectations of how their ascribed gender is to be performed. If one’s sex at birth is male, then they are expected to perform their male identity within the gender norms
so that they may be recognised as “being male”. In this view, Butler considers gender a verb because “the subject is not necessarily doing gender but is rather done by it” where gender has an effect, rather than the cause, on the subject (ibid, p.91). The individual is affected by gender norms rather than being the originator of gender and it because of this distinction that gender norms can be challenged through the different ways individuals can perform gender identities.

Performativity allows gender to be considered not as a rigid set of pre-determined norms but rather as unstable and varied, acknowledging the agency one has to challenge, subvert and resist gender norms (Johnson and Meinholf 1997). This subversive element brings performativity into the political realm because performativity seeks to question the power structures that enable and maintain the gender norms that govern society, which in turn, dictate how gender affects individuals. Norms exist to the extent that they are performed, insofar as people enact and re-enact them (ibid, p.120). Individuals (and groups) are excluded from society when they do not perform in ways that align with the norms of gender. Butler (2004) argues that the central struggle of performativity is on a political level because there is a tendency for dominant social structures to affect marginalised people so that they have to conform to gender norms or risk being ostracised.

3.2.2 Performativity and the development of NS/NNS binary distinction in TESOL

The concept of performativity can be used to analyse how language regulates the NS/NNS binary distinction in TESOL. I argue that the binary distinction is a kind of speech act because NS/NNS is both representative and causative of reality, and more specifically, the way professionals in TESOL are given meaning. The other concept of performativity is that language is also causative. In Butler’s words, the speaker is seen as talking in ways that brings about that which they speak. The way individuals use NS/NNS to identify who they are brings into reality the meaning that they represent. The act of stating “I’m a native speaker”, or “I’m a non-native speaker” categorises the individual into the NS/NNS binary distinction and brings about expectations of how they are to perform NS or NNS identity. The above statements act as regulators of identity, in that the individual, if they are to be recognised as a NS or NNS, are expected to meet the NS or NNS norms in order
to be recognised as one. Furthermore, the act of labelling individuals as either a NS or a NNS not only affects the individual, but reinforces the binary under which these terms are understood.

For example, in certain EFL contexts, individuals who state they are NS would be expected to speak English with an American or British accent. Failure to meet this NS norm would categorise them as a NNSs. The performativity of NS/NNS binary distinctions views the speaker as using language that is descriptive of their NS or NNS identity and, at the same time, the meaning of the language used takes action upon the speaker to render them a NS or NNS identity. Performativity then affects the meaning of the language used in addition to the speaker themselves, their identities and their social worlds.

Moreover, in certain EFL contexts, NS norms regulate the way NEST/NNEST labels are applied. For example, not having an American or UK passport could potentially categorise an individual as a NNS, despite being able to speak English with an American or British accent. The NNS label further categorises the individual as a NNEST in an EFL context because of the linguistic identity associations limited to passports from Inner Circle countries. These are basic examples that illustrate the problem of NS/NNS binary distinction in that the norms that regulate these two categories are bluntly applied and necessitate an alternative view of how language can bring about a more nuanced understanding of the norms that regulate teacher identity in TESOL.

3.2.3 The concept of performative repetition

Gender identities that are accepted by society are repeated and over time produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains (Butler 1993). Language is considered the vehicle that operates in a cyclical process, simultaneously representing and reinforcing meanings that are recognised as being “male” or “female”. This cyclical process contributes to the development of performative discourses, and are seen to precede the speaker (Yuval-Davis 2010) because discourses have a history where its authority has developed over time through repetition and/or in reference to authoritative sets of practices (Butler 1997). One could argue that there is historical precedence in how
gender was rendered insofar as it becomes extremely difficult to accept a reality without gender because it has been in existence for so long.

Identity is formed through repetition where an individual performs their identities repeatedly over time, usually within the limits set out by identity norms so that they may be accepted by society because they are recognised as “natural”. For example, an individual performs their male identity in ways that fall within the limits of “being male” so that they are accepted in their particular context. They repeat their performance because it is acceptable and, in doing so, reinforce the gender identity norm from which their performance is based. This repetition is not mechanical because the norms themselves are not static or fixed and neither, therefore, is identity because it exists in relation to the norms (Butler 1999). Power, the central concept in the creation of norms, as understood as multiple and interconnected, becomes the force behind the degree in which identities are recognised, or in Butlerian terms "intelligible" (ibid, p.37). To challenge identity norms is to challenge the social structures that render particular identities as acceptable at the expense of alternative possibilities. Performativity can be seen as a way of thinking in non-essentialist terms and is a useful perspective in recognising the possibility of performing identities in alternatives ways.

Performative identity norms rely on the collective repetition of performances in order to maintain meaning. The main implication is that performative identity norms are not fixed because of the need to constantly reinforce meaning. Repetition does not automatically imply exact copies of performances because there is a range in which identities can be performed. However narrow the range there is room for interpretation in which one can perform a given identity to the extent that is recognisable, yet varied enough to challenge the norms that limit the ways in which particular role identities can be performed. The potential for alternative ways of performing identities that challenge identity norms can, over time, through repetition, create different identity norms that become “natural” in the wider social world.
3.2.4 Maintaining the NS/NNS binary distinction through repetition

The NS/NNS binary distinction remains in place because the performative identity norms continue to be reinforced. The way in which NS and NNS are recognised is based on a set of norms that regulate how individuals are labelled. The collective repetition of individual performances throughout history has developed the norms that regulate membership into these categories. The type of accent, country of origin and racial identities are examples of specific norms associated with the NS/NNS binary distinction.

One example of performative repetition NS/NNS norms is the practice of hiring NSs over NNSs for ELT jobs. For many jobs, the criteria for a NS are made explicit: speak American or British English, hold a passport from one of the list of English speaking countries (e.g. USA, UK, Canada, Australia and sometimes Ireland and South Africa). These two points alone are the essential norms that make up the core of the NS/NNS distinction because individuals are divided accordingly depending on whether their performances do or do not meet those norms. Multiply the application of these two norms by a thousand, after several years they become standard practice to the point that hiring NS for ELT jobs is the seemingly natural thing to do.

3.2.5 Essentialism and the performativity of NS/NNS binary distinction

NS/NNS binary distinction uses an essentialist view of what these categories represent. According to Holliday (2011: 4) “essentialism presents people’s individual behaviour as entirely defined and constrained by the cultures in which they live so that the stereotype becomes the essence of who they are.” Essentialism operates on a reductionist approach that categorises whole groups of people as a way of making sense of how we are different from each other and this view can be used to understand the constructions of “native/non-native-speakerness” and racial identities.

In an essentialist view, culture is associated with geographical places (e.g. countries), ethnicities and languages (Holliday, Hyde and Kullman 2010). However this view of culture is problematic because “individuals become defined and constrained by the culture in which they live so that agency is transferred away from the individual to the
culture itself” (Holliday 2005: 18). Individuals who are labelled as NS/NNS are thus seen as representatives of “NS culture / NNS culture” and are expected to behave in ways that allows them to be recognised as part of “NS culture or NNS culture”. Part of understanding the NS/NNS binary distinction is finding out how these categories are reductionist in the way it identifies the “type” of person and the identifying characteristics of this “type”.

For example, an essentialist view of “NS culture” is argued to be associated specifically with countries such as the USA and UK. These particular countries are viewed as sources of “Western culture” from which, as Holliday (2005: 6) argues, “spring the ideals both of the English language and English language teaching methodology”. In certain contexts, individuals who are categorised as NS are regarded as representatives of “NS culture”, which is closely associated with “the English-speaking West” (Holliday 2005: 3). Thus, countries such as USA and UK are viewed to be ‘sources’ of the English language and, by extension, “providers” of English language teachers (Kachru 1992) and English language “culture” (Holliday 2004). For an individual to be categorised as a NS by other people in an EFL context (e.g. students, school management, parents) they would need to be a national from the USA or UK, speak English with an American or British accent and be racially white.

Essentialism views culture as homogeneous in which diversity is considered exceptional (Holliday 2011). This view is foregrounded when considering how VEM-NESTs do not fit the white racial stereotypes of “NS culture” and could be considered exceptions rather than being part of “NS culture”. Conversely, individuals who do not have an American or British accent may be categorised as a NNS because “NNS culture” is associated with countries that are not considered “providers” of English language and English language teaching. These are but blunt ways of categorising individuals but they demonstrate how labels can become representations of a certain kind of reality because norms have developed in order to regulate how the NS/NNS binary distinction is used.

Essentialism helps to explain, to some degree, the Otherisation process which, according to Holliday (2011:68) can be defined as “constructing or imagining a demonized image of
‘them’, or the Other, which supports an idealised image of ‘us’, or the Self.” These idealised or demonised images are applied to all members of the group, which then reduce the individual into representative stereotypes of the Other in that it becomes easy to imagine characteristics of categorical labels (e.g. “native-speaker”, “black people”, “the Chinese”) to define a person. In this study VEM-NESTs as well as the people in their respective contexts were involved in this process of Otherisation and serve as examples of how easy it is to construct and reduce people to be less that what they are (Holliday 2004: 21). I return to this notion in Chapter Seven when discussing the findings of the data analysis.

3.3 Language organises society through role identities

The notion of performative language draws attention to the ways in which language organises our encounters with the world. One example of how language achieves this is through the use of roles. Roles identities are social categories that are formed, organised, and reinforced in society. In this regard I draw upon the work of Sheldon Stryker to inform my concept of role identities. Stryker’s notion of role identities is part of his Identity Theory, and a major contribution to individual identity research. He draws from George Mead’s symbolic interactionist framework (see Deegan, ed. 2001 for updated version), summarised in the following statement: “society shapes self shapes social behaviour”. In this rendering the individual, termed as “self”, is considered influenced by society and social behaviour whereby the “self” is seen as a consequence of characteristics found in society (Stryker and Burke 2000:285). Stryker’s Identity Theory concentrates on examining how social structures affect the individual self and how the self influences social behaviour. His development of “roles” in identity development is a way of integrating structure and meaning to account for both micro- and macro- level phenomena.

Society is structured in part by the roles that individuals perform. Stryker’s conceptualisation of “society” departs from Mead’s starting points in which he views society as “a mosaic of relatively durable patterned interactions and relationships, differentiated yet organised, embedded in an array of groups, organisations,
communities and institutions, and intersected by crosscutting boundaries of class, ethnicity, age gender, religion and other variables” (Stryker and Burke 2000:285). The multitude and variety of groups, or what Stryker also terms “social networks”, are the larger social structures that influence individuals. From this definition of society Stryker considers the concept of “commitment” as the degree in which an individual’s relationship to others in their social networks is dependant on having a particular identity. This concept explains to some extent the subjective meaning and agency of how a person’s identity is formed. The degree to which one’s relationship with others depends on being a particular kind of person and therefore performing a particular kind of role is a way the individual can influence the social structures from which these interactions occur.

3.3.1 The multiplicity of identities conceptualised as role identities

Mead’s concept of “self” is seen as the bridge that covers the gap between society and social behaviour. In Mead’s view, people are considered to have multiple identities derived from multifaceted views of self. Stryker makes this definition more specific by defining identity as “self-cognitions which view self as a social object” (Stryker 1980: 15). With identity being a social object, an individual can evaluate and talk about and to themselves, in order to understand the expectations and assumptions made about them by others in their networks. Self is comprised of multiple identities where specific identities are chosen at specific times but the actual self is not necessarily situation specific because it can be carried into multiple situations that an individual experiences (Serpe and Stryker 2011). The way in which Stryker operationalises the multiplicity of identities is in his concept of role identities. The “self” is different to role identities in which an individual performs specific identities (e.g. roles) as is necessary in a given situation. Central to this view is the concept of “identity salience” where the importance attached to certain identities influences the amount of effort and the outcome of how individuals perform in each role (Burke and Reitzes 1981). Role identities exist in a hierarchy of salience, where role identities that are ranked highest are most likely to be used in situations that involve different aspects of self (Desrochers et al. 2004:61). When linked to the dimensions of commitment, the hierarchical ordering of identities is
influenced by the range and depth of relationships the self enters into (Burke and Reitzes 1991:241)

Role identities are self-defininitions or “identifications” that people apply to themselves as a consequence of the structural roles they occupy (Hogg et al. 1995:256) through the process of self-definition as a member of a particular social category (Burke 1980). According to Stets and Burke (2000:224) “the self is reflexive in that it can take itself as an object and can categorise, classify, or name itself in particular ways in relation to other social categories and classifications”. The meanings that people attach to different role identities help individuals set apart specific roles as “referential roles” that are closely associated with the one they occupy. For example, an individual may take on the role of “teacher” which has meaning in connection to “student”.

3.3.2 Variability of role identities

Stryker’s concept of role identities is a useful aid in identifying what role identities are salient in a social structure but does not easily recognise the dynamic nature of the role and does not easily acknowledge the complexity and variability that can exist within any given role (see Turner et al., 1987). This is in part due to the fact that Stryker views society not only as structured, but stable, implying that there is relatively little change occurring. Thus, the active nature of self is not easily accounted for in this view because it is assumed there is a shared understanding about what is used as guidelines for role identity behaviour. As Burke and Reitzes (1991) argue, the narrow concept of normative expectations of role identities makes it difficult to explain the persistence of individual actions across situations (p. 239). The assumption that people will adjust their behaviour to the norms expected of a role identity does not account for the variety of ways role identities are performed. One of the ways that account for the variety of role identities is through the concept of performativity.

3.2.3 NS/NNS as role identities in TESOL

Stryker’s concept of role identity is a useful way of understanding how the NS/NNS binary distinction operates in TESOL. It can be argued that NS and NNS are the most salient role identities in the social structure of English language teaching and, as such, continue to be
the defining feature of teacher identity. On an individual level, the meaning ascribed to each of these labels affects the way an individual is valued in a given context. In some instances, the NS role identity is valued over the NNS role identity.

Moreover role identities exist in relation to other role identities. In this regard the NS/NNS binary distinction exists because each is defined in relation to the other. In other words, one cannot exist without the other. For example, the non-native speaker definition is seen as a deficiency in knowledge (Cook 1999) which is extended to being the imperfect English teacher whereas the native speaker is the expert in both knowledge and teaching. In TESOL there may be other ways in which teacher identity can be defined, certainly authors such as Medgyes, Rampton, and Jenkins have argued for alternative approaches to teacher identity that are outside of the binary distinction. Until alternative approaches become “the natural way of being”, NS/NNS role identities remain the way in which teacher identities are largely defined in TESOL.

3.4 The performativity of role identities

The roles individuals choose to perform contribute towards the ways they construct their identities. In Stryker’s view (1980) the positioning of role identities depends upon a named and classified world and therefore roles within an identity theory frame are dependent on the components of a structured society. The process of taking on a role involved more than recognition but an incorporation into self, the meanings, and expectations associated with that role and its performance (Burke 1991). These expectations, or role identity norms, guide behaviour to the extent to which an individual adheres to or challenges the behaviours associated with the role they take on (Stryker 1980). Moreover the amount of commitment an individual has to the relationships entered affects the frequency of specific role identities undertaken. If the depth of particular relationships are sufficient and beneficial for the individual, then the role identities they take on are done in order to continue positively reinforcing their self.

In the same way gender norms develop through the collective repetition of performed gender identities, role identity norms develop through the collective repetition of role identity performances. On one level, the grouping of role identities can have a number of
individuals performing role identities in a given situation. This inadvertently creates a shared group identity in which membership is based on the extent to which individuals enact role identities in ways that are recognised as appropriate for the situation. On a deeper level, the collective performances of role identities create role identity norms that define and regulate the ways in which role identities can be performed. Role identity performances that do not adhere to the norms render their performance as unrecognisable and the performer is at risk of being rejected from membership into the role group. The self is affected by the level of commitment one has to repeatedly performing particular roles, and thus individuals aim to perform role identities that are socially recognisable, because the performances can be positive identity reinforcements and open up membership into a shared group identity. The repetition of individual role identities, over time, for the above reasons, further reinforce the role identity norms to the degree that the individual will choose not to perform their role identities differently because of the threat of rejection.

3.4.1 The performativity of racialised role identities

Performativity is not a singular definitive instance but a reiterative practice through which language brings about the effect that it names. The act of declaring a new born “It’s a girl!” brings the gendered individual into a discourse system of gendered meaning. Through an individual’s lifetime the discourse system continues to regulate the ways in which the individual enacts their identities, reinforcing meaning through repetitive acts of performed role identities. The individual “becomes a girl” through continuously performing “girl” according to the gender identity norms within a discourse system of gendered meaning. In this view, the performativity of gender identities reinforces and regulates the discourse systems through the continuous repetition of gendered performances throughout the individual’s lifetime. “It is the power of discourse to bring about what it names through the citing or repetition of norms” (Mirón and Inda 2000:100). The performative aspect of language produces discourse systems (e.g. the behaviours, “cultures”, action, institutions) that are influenced by gender identity norms. Identity norms are part of the discourse systems produced through language and used to pinpoint the performativity of identity. The individual, then, is not the author of meaning but its effect.
An example of how the individual is affected by discourse systems is through Mirón and Inda’s (2000) concept of performativity of race. This view is informed by Butler’s theory of the performative constitution of gender. In both views of performativity, neither race nor gender are regarded as “natural”. Doing so would fix them as permanent in ways that no one questions the hierarchical relationship between racialised or gendered subjects. The way in which difference between racialised groups has been accounted for is through the naturalising of racial difference. According to Mirón and Indra (2000:85) “naturalisation is a representational scheme calculated to fix difference forever, to secure discursive closure in order to render things so natural that no one questions the hierarchical relationships between racialised subjects.” Exemplifying this were the eighteenth and nineteenth century rationales for slavery in which the subordinate status of black slaves was attributed to their lazy and “innate primitive natures”, therefore genetically incapable of civilised living (see Hall 1997). This rendered interventions, such as educational and welfare programs, as wasteful because blacks were considered incapable of moving beyond their natures. This practice of naturalising difference continues, and it is even more important put forth the argument that race is a socially constructed category of knowledge.

The process of naturalising difference is through language that moves beyond the descriptive and into the production of discourses that regulate the subject. In this view discourse itself produces the subjects who incarnate the particular forms of knowledge which the discourse produces (Hall 1997). Racial discourses are but one of the classification systems inherent in the society that produces and maintains social order. The subject is given meaning because they are allotted a place within a classificatory system constructed along binary oppositions such as white/black, self/other, NS/NNS. So while race is not considered a “natural” category it nevertheless plays a central role in the construction and rationalisation of orders of difference. It is in the act of naming that constitutes the subject, and therefore becomes “naturalised” because of the repeated references to discourse applied to the subject. In other words, “racial performativity is not a singular act of racial subject constitution, but a reiterative practice through which discourse brings about the effect that it names” (Mirón and Inda 2000:99).
3.4.2 Racialised role identities, role identity norms and the NS/NNS binary distinction

Racialised role identities constitute themselves through the discourses related to the categories that exist in the social world, reiterated over time through the collective performances of individuals. In racialised role identities, language moves beyond the descriptive and into the production of role identity norms. The process of developing racialised identities for particular roles emerges through language that brings into being the wider discourses attributed to the racialised individual and the role identity norms that the individual needs to adhere to if their performed role identities are to be recognised by society. However, the racialised aspect of particular role identities are not always made explicit but are rather implied and reiterated over time, by the individual who performs, or rather who are allowed to perform particular roles. The implied racialised identity norms applied to particular role identities places limits as to who can and who cannot perform a role identity. In the area of NS/NNS role identities, the racial associations of a white native-speaker can be argued to be historical precedent, beginning in the British colonised territories, where NS/NNS were role identities clearly defined along political, class and racial lines. It can be argued that this delineation is carried over to the present day. VEM-NEST is an example of a racialised role identity that challenges the implied racial identities of native English speaking teachers because they do not quite fit the racial norms of this role identity. This topic will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Six based on the analysis and findings of this study.

3.5 Narrative as a process for performed role identities

This thesis considers narrative as a process for performing role identities. I will focus specifically on narratives as stories of experiences because it is within experience that role identities are performed. The telling of stories is a meaning-making process in which the narrator comes to understand their experiences and, in doing so, can open up the possibility of a better understanding of themselves. To present my conceptualisation of narrative, I will first discuss the areas of narrative methodology relevant to my research, before presenting my view of how narrative is a process of performing role identities.
3.5.1 Locating this study within traditions of narrative research

Narratology encompasses research in literary theory, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, film and drama. However, the premise that narratives allow human beings to make sense of the world has created what is identified as the “narrative turn” in humanities and social science research. It is argued that narrative itself is both the phenomenon and the method (Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Riessman 1993). It has been pointed out that the study of narrative does not fit neatly into any category, be it the social sciences, law or medicine. The “narrative turn” in social sciences has seen the development of a variety of narrative traditions from Narratology (e.g. Propp 1984) to Phenomenology (e.g. Moustakas 1994) and Psychotherapy (e.g. Josselson 2004; Polkinghorne 1988; Riessman 1993). Moreover, areas such as anthropology and ethnomethodological fields have developed their own narrative traditions such as Life History (e.g. Andrews 2001; Wengraf 2001), Life Story (e.g. Goodson 1996; Lieblich et al. 1998), Ethnographic Narratives (e.g. Cortazzi 1993; Denzin 1997; Czarniawska 1998) whereas in the field of education there is a focus on Narrative Inquiry (e.g. Connelly and Clandinin 1990) and personal narratives of experience in conversational interactions (e.g. Ochs and Capps 2004) as a means of examining lived experiences of teachers.

3.5.2 Narrative ways of knowing

The telling of stories is acknowledged as the essential aspect of human existence where throughout history different forms of telling have existed across cultures (Barthes 1966 in Abbott 2002). According to Bruner (1986) the fundamental epistemological tenant of narrative research is that the telling of stories is the primary method in which individuals come to understand the world. Lyotard (1979) initially argues that narrative forms of knowledge and scientific knowledge are not mutually exclusive but that all writing, including scientific content, is dependant on narrative structures and devices. Lyotard’s premise laid the groundwork for Bruner (1986) and Polkinghorne (1988) to examine how narrative modes organise experience in ways that are influenced by the intentions of human action (Czarniawska 2004) and encompass how knowledge can be understood through narrative means. Bruner (1986) discusses how narrative ways of knowing co-exists to what he terms the paradigmatic or scientific view of the world in that each mode provides a distinct yet complementary way of ordering experience and constructing
reality. Causality is the central tenant to each mode of thought but is defined differently. The paradigmatic mode looks for causality in the form of universal truths and conditions which exist outside of the temporal realm whereas a narrative mode derives causality from particular connections between events that are contextually embedded (Richardson 1990). Each mode serves a different purpose and to ignore one at the expense of the other will fail to encapsulate the rich diversity of thought (Bruner 1986).

As method of inquiry, narrative is the study of stories told by individuals. This method is not only about textual analysis but encompasses research into how individuals experience the world. The experiences of individuals are seen as reconstructed in the telling of stories and retold in oral or written format (Riessman 1993). However representation of stories can also occur through other symbolic systems (e.g. photography, film). Regardless of their form, stories imbue life events with a temporal and logical order in order to demystify them and establish coherence across past, present and as yet, unrealised experience (Ochs and Capps 2001:2). Knowledge constructed through this process is recognised as situated, transient, partial and provisional; characterised by multiple perspectives, truths and meanings (McCormack 2004). Central to narrative as a method is the view that these understandings are constructed and reconstructed through stories (Mishler 1986). However narratives are not completely accurate accounts of events (Riessler 1993) but subjective accounts of reality, serve the purpose of making sense of experience through narrativised form (Cortazzi 1993). The exploration of experiences can reveal the narrator’s values, beliefs and identities (Cortazzi 1993; Gee 1985; Bruner 1991), their view of their local context (Plummer 1995; Clandinin and Connelly 2000) and how they understand the wider social world (Riessman 2008).

3.5.3 The discursive nature of narrative

Alongside narrative ways of knowing is the view that language has a constructive element; it builds objects, worlds, minds and social contexts. Echoing the nature of language in performativity, words are about the world but they also form the world as they represent it (Wetherell 2001). The reciprocity of language (Gee 1999:95) simultaneously reflects and constructs reality. From this position language is considered
not as a separate, neutral entity but as an active element in terms of how it is used and how it is constructed. This view of language is in opposition to more functional views where historically, applied linguists believed that language, when regarded as a system, responds to the functions of language use and has different tasks to perform (Rogers 2004:5). For example, structuralist views based in Saussure’s (1974) work, view language as a decontextualized abstract system of signs that stand outside social influences. This position sees the primary use of language as a system or code that exists apart from society and is called upon by individuals who make a choice as to what part of the system to use where meaning is derived from its opposition to other symbols (Maybin 2001). This view also assumes that the system or set of codes is homogenous throughout, regardless of culture (ibid).

However, as Fairclough (1989:21) states, “Sociolinguists have proven that language is not a product of individuals choosing which codes to use but rather, language is socially determined.” In this respect the language used in narratives does not occur in isolation but are social products resulting from the interactive relationship between the narrator and the audience whose relationship is lived out in narrative form (Gergen 1994). Furthermore the interactions that occur between the context of the narrative event and the wider discourses that affect the content and form of the narrative form part of the socially interactive elements that constitute reality.

Furthermore, narratives are subjective accounts where the desire to communicate meaning is considered a deliberate act or “illocutionary intentions” (Bruner 1986) of presenting aspects of an individual in ways that they want to be known (Riessman 1993). The ways in which identities are narratively enacted are guided by the main purpose of the narrative and is influenced by the intended audience. The teller may have a particular purpose for telling their chosen story, for example, to entertain or to admonish their audience. However, as McAdams (2006:111) argues, if the narrator cannot convey their story in a way that engages the audience, then there is a possibility that the story - and the storyteller - will not be understood. Thus, the relationship between the narrator and the audience is central to the development of the content. In narrative research, all narratives are considered co-constructed. The audience, whether physically present or
not, exerts crucial influence on what can and cannot be said, how things should be expressed, what can be taken for granted, and what needs explaining (Salmon and Riessman 2008).

3.6 **Narrative as a process of meaning-making**

This thesis focuses on the lived experiences of individuals and therefore the stories presented in this thesis are stories of experience. These stories portray the ways in which the research participants are coming to understand their experiences and, as they do so, come to understand themselves: who they are, who they are not, and how their VEM-NEST identities are shaped in the social contexts they live in. Their stories are dynamic in nature, where on one hand, they constitute past experiences but at the same time provide ways in which they can make sense of the past (Lieblich et al, 1998; Riessman 2008). Moreover their stories play a social function in that the context of the stories and the "where / when/ how" they are told need to be taken into consideration. As stated previously, narratives are a meaning-making process. Narratives told by individuals can often serve different purposes for individuals than they do for groups (Riessman 2008) where the functions of individual narratives can be to remember, argue, justify, entertain, engage whereas group narratives use stories to foster a sense of belonging (ibid).

3.6.1 **Strategic functions of narratives**

The functions of the individual narratives in this thesis can vary and overlap, therefore I will focus on discussing a few specific functions relevant to my study. The first function of stories is to make sense of past experiences (see Polkinghorne 1988; Clandinin and Connelly 2000; Ochs and Capps 2001). Through the process of narration, the narrator creates a storyline, making choices along the way on what information to share and what to leave out while they are coming to terms with what happened. Furthermore, the storyline is crafted by the narrator based on the resources available to them. For example, if the narrator is describing an experience of “being manly”, they draw upon their views and understandings of what “being a man” entails. In the process of narration, the audience is a major influence in the crafting of the story because stories are told for particular audiences for particular purposes. The telling of stories is a collaborative process where the interactions that occur are founded in the relationship
between the teller and the audience. The co-constructed nature of narratives reiterates how stories are created in a relational interaction, a notion that affects what stories do. Thus, the narrator actively shares their experiences in a format that is intelligible (Butler 1990) to their audience, meaning there are elements within the story that the audience can recognise and, ultimately understand the story being told.

Secondly, stories engage the audience with the experience of the narrator through inviting the listeners/readers/observers to engage with the world through their perspective (Squire 2008). The contents of stories are edited by the teller in order to make their experiences accessible. However, the audience may interpret the story differently regardless of the teller’s original purpose (Riessman 2008). The potential for misunderstanding, highlights the subjective voices of the teller and the subjective listening of the audiences which is, by in large, the interactional co-construction of meaning. The story provides a starting point for developing further understanding of the social construction of each interactant’s subjectivity (Goodson 2013:30). Moreover, the subjectivities that come into the story telling process indicate the need for meaning to be negotiated in order for understanding, but not necessarily agreement, to occur.

The third function of narratives is agentive, because stories are told for different purposes, whether it be to persuade, argue, entertain, mobilise or even mislead the audience (Riessman 2008). Stories are told because they hold some significance to the teller as a way of building and expressing personal identity and agency (Squire, 2008) and therefore its purpose is strategic. According to Gready (2008:137) personal narratives “allow the narrator to relive, control, transform, (re)imagine events, to reclaim and construct chosen identities, social interactions and communities.” As an agentive process, the positioning of the teller, the characters, and the audience within and throughout the story can reveal the underlying issues of power that exist.

Finally, narratives explore the relationship between the lived experiences of individuals and the ways they construct their identities. Narratives present people’s lived experiences which are mediated and understood in ways that have meaning for them (Ellis and Flaherty 1992; Lieblich et al 1998). The narrative mode is one of the many ways
in which individuals can come to understand their identities. The interactive process of meaning-making distinguishes narrative from other forms of communication where individuals and groups construct identities through storytelling because it can accomplish certain ends (Riessman 2008:8). Stories that people tell themselves and to others about who they are and who they are not; about who and how they would like to be (Cortazzi 1993) are choices made in the construction of identities. The phrases “living narrative” (Ochs and Capps 2001) and “on-going experiential text” (Connelly and Clandinin 1990) are used to describe the way in which stories are identities-in-making. In this sense the story is one’s identity, in both content and form (Lieblich et al. 1998). Identities, however, are fluid (Riessman 2008) in which the production of identities is always in process, continuous and never completed (Hall 1996). Narratives, as a meaning-making process, are part of the overall construction and reproduction of identities, both individual and collective. The “knowing” of one’s identities is translated into telling (Elliott 2005) in which the texts that are produced, become “an embodiment” (Yuval-Davis 2010) of the identity-making process.

3.6.2 Performativity and identity in narratives

Performativity in narrative is the way in which identities are enacted within and through the stories one tells about their lives. According to Langellier (1999:127) focusing on the performance emphasises the way telling intervenes between the experience and the story. The performativity of narrative is not only situated in the occasion of the telling but in the forces that shape the discourses that affect the content and form of the story. Emphasising the performative in a narrative is not to render the narrators’ identities as fake, but rather situated with an audience in mind. The story is both a specific performance (i.e. telling a story) to a particular audience and the content of the story (i.e. identities) is a re-presentation of experiences that are enhanced by linguistic features that intensify or emphasise the experience. As Riessman explains, “one can’t be a "self" by oneself; rather, identities are constructed in "shows" that persuade” (2008:106). The narratives presented in this thesis were created for the purposes of this study and did not just emerge from the interactions between myself and the participants. In Langellier’s words, “personal experience stories are made, not found, by either narrators or researchers” (1999:128). This notion of “identity as communicative practice” (Sfard and
Prusak 2005) encapsulates how performative aspects in the narrativisation of experiences conveys the narrators’ identities for the purposes of the interaction. I performed a particular aspect of my identities in my initial written narrative because it was the way I wanted to be known by my research participants. In response, the identities performed in their written narratives were in response to my own story, crafted for the purposes of this study, using language to present identities they wanted to share with me.

3.7 Summary of conceptual framework

The conceptual framework underpinning my study takes as its starting point the view that specific identities (e.g. NEST), are performed in specific situations (e.g. Adult EFL class in China), and that this process might be termed “Performed Role Identities” (PRIs). Within this PRI process, language plays an active role, and affects how individuals shape their identities. The conceptual framework underpinning my study has four main aspects which are as follows: performed role identities, performativity, role identities, and role norms. I will now briefly explain them, and the relationships between them.

Performed role identities is my view of how specific identities are performed during specific situations. The concept of performed role identities considers language as an active element in shaping reality. Performativity refers to the ways language performs the actions they refer to. For example, the statement “I’m a NEST” places me along a linguistic binary of NS/NNS because, by and large, it remains the main way English language teachers are categorised in TESOL. By using this statement I, and the society (e.g. TESOL) in which I utter this statement, simultaneously bring about my NEST identity.

Role identities are situation-specific identities that individuals take on as necessary in a specific context. The situation outlines the types of role identities available and/or appropriate. Individuals often choose a role identity as a way of categorising themselves into the structural roles available to them in a specific situation. For example, in an EFL classroom situation, the role identities of “teacher” and “student” are available. There may be other role identities that may become active within a classroom situation (e.g. “language school director”; “language assistant”) but individuals take on, or are given role identities to enact as deemed necessary for the situation. In other instances, role
identities are not chosen but applied to the individual as a result of being categorised by others in a specific situation. For example, in China I was categorised as “NNEST” instead of a “NEST” by my students whenever I started a new class. I did not choose the role identity of “NNEST” but rather it was applied to me because of my ethnicity. Consequently I had to negotiate with my students my chosen “NEST” role identity in that particular situation. This example shows that the situated audience plays an active part in how role identities are performed. Role identities may be performed in a variety of ways but the performance must be done in such a way as to be accepted by others in the specific situation. The audience and the individual must have a shared understanding of which role norms are active in the situation in order for acceptance to occur.

Closely related to the way individuals take on or are given role identities is the concept of role norms. Role norms are expectations that regulate the performance of role identities. Role norms define who can and cannot perform roles and are situated within the specific context in which the performance occurs. Role norms develop over time through the collective repetition of individually performed role identities to the point that role norms are considered “natural”. The binary distinction of NS/NNS is one example of role norms entrenched to the point that it is difficult to imagine TESOL without them. However, role norms are not fixed or static but open to alternative possibilities that can change role norms. Individuals can choose to perform role identities in ways that extend the range of what is regarded as “natural” so that new role norms may emerge.

Narratives of experience bring a different dimension to how role identities are performed. The telling of stories is a meaning-making process in which the storyteller comes to understand their experiences and, in doing so, can open up the possibility of a better understanding of their identities. Different role identities are performed at different points of the story and I have chosen to focus on two: event role identities and narrator role identities. Event role identities are performed during specific events in a story and provide insight into what the storyteller was thinking at the time. In comparison, the narrator role identity is a role identity performed within the telling and provides a meta-commentary on the story content and role identities performed at specific points. The meta-commentary is the way the storyteller makes sense of their
experiences for the purpose of conveying “the point” of their story to the audience. The link between role identities performed during past events (event role identities) and what the performer thinks of their performance, is the narrator role identity.
Chapter Four: Methodological design and research report

4.1 Overview of chapter

This chapter presents the rationale and design of the narrative based methodology used to generate the data for this thesis. My rationale for using a narrative based approach began with the desire to share my experiences of being a VEM-NEST. I had been sharing my story informally with my friends and family and wondered if there were other VEM-NESTs like me who had undergone similar experiences working as an English language teacher. Narrative research was a method of accessing VEM-NEST stories in a more purposeful way.

The data used for this thesis are restoried narratives which are defined as a combination of the written narrative content and semi-structured interview data. Restoried narratives were developed as a way of presenting a more detailed account of the participant’s experiences. The research undertaken during my MA demonstrated that some of the content of the written narratives needed clarification because the stories themselves were not as detailed as expected. In addition, I do not have a prior relationship with any of the participants that took part in this thesis and was therefore unsure if I would be able to access sufficient data from one single encounter. Taking these concerns into account I designed a methodological approach that had two potential storytelling encounters from which I could combine the data into a single story. The details of my methodological design and the process undertaken to develop the participants' restoried narratives are discussed in the following sections.

4.2 Overview of research stages undertaken

The study was conducted in six stages. With the exception of Pre-Stage One, each stage built upon the actions of the previous one therefore it was necessary that this process was carried out in sequential order. The following table presents the order in which the study was carried out.
The original intention was to proceed through each stage with the participants advancing together at the same time. In practice, however, this was not the case due to recruiting participants at different times and working with different participant response times at each major stage. The following sections present the processes undertaken with each individual and provides details of the actions and decisions taken at each point.

### 4.3 Pre-Stage One: Negotiating and establishing rapport to generate narratives

In narrative based research the relationship between the audience and the narrator is vital to the narrative process. Stories are generated under discernible circumstances in which the narrator and the audience are involved in a give-and-take process of configuring the story content (Gubrium and Holstein 2009:42). In this process both parties are involved in continuously negotiating their relationship (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) because the storytelling is responsive to the individual perspectives of the interviewer and interviewee. In this sense, stories are staged (Gubrium and Holstein 2009) in that they are told to someone for a specific purpose.

My thesis uses a narrative based approach in which the relationship between myself the researcher, and my participants, forms the basis of how their stories were generated. The aim of Stage One focused on creating a good rapport with the participants of this study in order to establish a space from which they would be willing to share their stories. The participants in this study were not personal contacts and I did not have the option of being introduced via a mutual acquaintance for the reasons outlined in the sections.
below. In a very real sense, they were as unknown to me as I was to them, and I felt that I needed to go one step further to create some kind of relationship if they were to share their stories with me.

With regards to this, I needed to "explain" myself (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) in a way that presented who I am and how this study is related to who I am. Therefore, during Pre-Stage One I wrote down the story of my VEM-NEST experiences to share with the research participants. My story was autobiographical in nature and included a description of my linguistic and ethnic background, which are aspects of my identity closely tied to my awareness of being a VEM-NEST. This level of detail is not readily shared and needed to be encouraged through a mutual understanding of what was expected from the storyteller and the audience.

4.3.1 Researcher identity

I wrote my own story as a way of introducing who I am to my participants, performing my identity in ways I wanted to be known by (Riessman 1993). It was my intention my story would enable the participants to get to know me through reading my story and, in response, allow me to get to know them through writing their own story. My story was used to elicit a response from the participants and thereby performing their identities in ways that they wanted to be known in the context of a research study.

Part of sharing my story was to establish that I was a VEM-NEST like them. As a researcher of this particular study the insights from my own lived experiences potentially brought a more nuanced view into the VEM-NEST phenomenon. While I am not considered an insider of an organisation (Brannick and Coghlan 2007) I was in the position to reflexively consider how my ethnic identity affected the process of data generation and my approach to analysing the data. Revealing my ethnic identity in my story was central to establishing a rapport with participants because it informed them that their data would be analysed from the “viewpoint” of an ethnic minority. It is important to note that being an ethnic minority scholar researching other ethnic minorities is not the final authority with regards to researching race related topics. Rhodes (1994) argues that the logic of “race matching” to study those of the same race
actually contributes to the marginalisation of scholars relegated to studying only those of the same race. Moreover, Twine (2007) argues that there are numerous advantages of having researchers who are racially different to their subjects, one of which is the potential to have different views on the phenomenon from different racial perspectives.

My study presents a particular viewpoint that is situated in my experiences as an ethnic minority, but it is my no means the only viewpoint that should be considered.

4.3.2 Development of my story

My story had three sections designed to focus on a particular aspect of my experiences. Each section presented a particular aspect of my VEM-NEST identity. It is a highly structured approach that focuses on presenting my experiences of being a VEM-NEST in TESOL as opposed to a more general sense of being an English language teacher. I developed this three-part structure as a guide for myself because at the time of writing my story my audience was largely unknown to me and I needed an outline to frame the content. The three sections are outlined below:

(i) Background: The purpose of this section was to provide an opportunity for the teller to share aspects of their background that they thought was necessary to situate the audience and to provide contextual starting points for subsequent content. The details shared in this section could be considered separate yet closely related phenomena to their subsequent professional experiences. The participants in this study were not personally connected to me and it was necessary to provide enough background information to allow the participants to have a sense of who I am. In my written narrative I shared details about my Filipino-Canadian heritage, where I was born and how I came to see myself as a native speaker of English. These details became important topics at specific points of my story.

(ii) Critical Incident: In my previous research for my MA TESOL dissertation (see Javier, 2007) I had asked participants in that study about their experiences of being an English language teacher with the hope that they would talk about their ethnic identity. However some of the stories did not discuss VEM-NEST identity or, when mentioned, was discussed in ways not directly related to them. This made it difficult to understand how
their views related to their lived experiences. For my thesis I was more strategic and specifically asked about particular events or memories that highlighted their ethnicity in TESOL. This section focuses on a specific event where the ethnicity of the narrator was emphasised in such a way as to raise their awareness of being a VEM-NEST in TESOL. The emphasis can be positive or negative in nature even though the focus is on the narrator’s reaction and how this event shaped their view of themselves. The rationale is adapted from Flanagan’s (1954) broad view of Critical Incident Technique on observing human behaviour where he defines incident as

“…any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act. To be critical, an incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects” (p. 327).

This section was aiming to discover the significance of an event to the storyteller. My Critical Incident is my experience of deliberately using my Canadian identity as a justification for being a NS. This was not the first time or the last time this event occurred but it certainly was the first instance where I remember using my identity in a strategic way. Surfacing this memorable event brought a greater awareness of my VEM-NEST identity, which I have been managing since then. I was my intention that through the act of telling my story participants would be compelled to share their own experiences in response to my own. It is important to note that I was not seeking for a replication or confirmation of my story but rather a response in which participants were free to share similar or different events and views.

(iii) Reflection: This final section was a space where participants could reflect on what they have just shared. This reflection could be a more introspective analysis of their identity and / or a wider commentary on how their experiences situate them in the TESOL profession entailing an evaluation of the previous sections of the narrative shared. The aim of this section is based on the Labov’s (1972) view that narratives contain an evaluative element and I chose to create this section as a specific space in which I could retrospectively present my view and opinions on the event.
Riessman (1993:21) sees evaluation as the purpose or the “soul” of the narrative, expressing both the point of the story and crucially, how the narrator wants to be understood (Patterson 2008). This section was an area where participants could share their own thoughts and views on related issues, providing the space to comment on wider topics. In practice there were a variety of different responses on a range of subjects in response to this section of my own story.

My story focused on providing enough detail to present my story as clearly as possible but within a reasonable word count so participants would not feel overwhelmed with having to read a long document. The final version I used for this study is found in Appendix A. For easier accessibility I converted it to a PDF format prior to sending and I decided to share the same version of my story to each participant in order to compare and contrast the responses received. Moreover, I did not feel it would be feasible to tailor a different draft for each participant because at this point I did not know who my participants were going to be.

4.3.3 Ethical considerations and procedures

The importance of carrying out research that in an ethical and respectful manner cannot be understated. Educational research is varied and complex, encompassing a multitude of different theoretical, political and methodological stances. Regardless of these differences, it is vital that all parties are aware of their responsibilities when carrying out their research activities. This involves a thorough awareness of the following processes and procedures put in place to ensure research is undertaken with the utmost ethically informed approach. To this end I have sought to reach an ethically acceptable position in which the action carried out for the purpose of this thesis could be considered justifiable and sound (British Educational Research Association 2011).

The University of Manchester has specific ethical regulations for researchers to follow, which are implemented across all disciplines via the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC). In compliance with university ethics regulations the UREC application form which comprised two parts was filled out: an overview of the proposed study to be included in the form itself and a Participant Information Sheet and a signed consent form
that I adapted for my study (see Appendix B). These documents, in part, ensure that I would carry out my study with participants who can provide voluntary and informed consent. These documents were collated and submitted to the UREC committee for approval in early 2010. Participants that choose to take part in any research are asked to sign a written consent form which is then returned to the researcher and filed. In line with the UREC procedures I collected signed PIS forms all the participants sent via email from which I printed and filed securely in such a way that they can be made available upon request.

Researchers are also required to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and University Data Protection Policy (2013) with regards to data storage and data anonymising. In line with the regulations the data generated for this study is stored in an encrypted drive accessible only by me. Since I use a desktop and a laptop computer I needed a system that would enable me to work on the documents without having to create separate copies. To this end I used Dropbox, a cloud computing application, where I created a password protected folder to store the data used for my PhD. This application enabled me to access documents from both computers. Any printed copies used were filed away in a locked drawer either at my university office or in my private study space at home, accessible only by me. When necessary anonymised versions of the data were shared with my supervisors for the purposes of advising me through the analysis stages of the study.

4.4 Stage One: Establishing rapport and generating written narratives

Initially I had planned to recruit participants working at higher education institutions in the UK. In the autumn of 2010, I attempted to contact the Director of Studies (or equivalent) at twenty-two university departments that provided English language tuition and enquired whether they had any VEM-NESTs on staff. Nineteen universities replied of which ten were reluctant to divulge this information. From this pool of ten universities four suggested I contact their HR department. I followed this up and sent further emails to the respective HR departments but I was not offered any further information. Out of the nine remaining universities who replied only two confirmed that they had a VEM-NEST on staff and kindly forwarded my introductory email to these individuals to decide
for themselves if they wanted to get in touch. The two potential participants did not reply. Due to the difficulties I was facing I turned to what Wengraf (2001) proposes for a more purposeful rather than convenience sampling approach. It became clear that I was not going to find enough participants using my current approach and therefore needed to look further afield. I began by emailing my personal network of contacts to see if anyone could introduce me to potential research participants outside of a UK higher education context. This effort yielded only two new contacts that were available to take part and it was at this point that I turned to social media applications to find participants.

4.4.1 Recruiting research participants using social media

In March 2011 I set up my profile on three different social media platforms in preparation to identify and approach potential research participants. First, I created a blog to use for professional purposes (see http://eljeejavier.com). The copy of my story and an online version of the PIS document were posted online so that interested individuals could learn more about who I am and about the study. Furthermore, I used this blog to write about different aspects of my life (e.g. PhD student experiences; living in Manchester) as a way of providing an additional way for participants to get to know me. Once this was set up, I focused my efforts on using LinkedIn and Facebook to search for research participants because these are two major web spaces where online interactions can take place.

LinkedIn is designed to be used in a more professional capacity where according to their website, “LinkedIn operates the world’s largest professional network on the Internet in over 200 countries and territories. LinkedIn’s mission is to connect the world’s professionals to make them more productive and successful” (LinkedIn, 2012). This website holds the profiles of several million professionals and therefore I felt this was an ideal place to start searching for individuals that fit my participant profile. Moreover, LinkedIn allows users to customise an online CV for others to view and allows users to create and join discussion groups. Not only would I be able to view the online profiles of potential participants but would also be able to find them via the various discussion groups. In March 2011, I created a profile that presented my educational and employment history online (see http://www.linkedin.com/pub/eljee-javier/31/a4/746). Moreover, I was able to link my blog to my LinkedIn profile in order to direct interested
parties to an online version of the PIS. The following figure is the view of what a member of the public would see if they searched for me online, where my current status as a PhD student is foregrounded as a way to present my identity as a researcher:

![LinkedIn Profile](image)

Figure 4.1: Screenshot of public view of my LinkedIn profile

In terms of the actual search, I utilised LinkedIn’s networking feature known as "connections". The website operates on the concept of "connections" where you can only
be connected to individuals that you know or have been introduced to. These connections have two levels. The first level of connection means that you personally know this individual whereas the second level of connection is an individual you know indirectly through a first connection. On a free account, I was limited because I could only contact up to second level connections within my network. Therefore, I signed up for a temporary paid account in order to access members with whom I had no previous connection. This allowed me to directly contact individuals who I thought fit my participant profile and because there was a time limit (1 month) I was highly motivated to use this time efficiently.

Using LinkedIn was successful because I was able to recruit six research participants for my study and I was curious to see if other social media platforms would yield more participants. My curiosity grew when one of my research participants suggested that I contact the administrators of the Facebook Group that she was a member of. In November 2011, I began to use Facebook Groups to look for more research participants. I chose to use Facebook Groups because I did not want to contact individuals through using my personal profile as I wanted to keep that area for private use. Additionally, I felt it was not appropriate to approach individuals through their Facebook profile as it may be seen as invasive. Facebook Groups, on the other hand, would enable me to introduce my research to a large number of people and potentially garner the interests of individuals who could contact me directly.

Before proceeding with my search, I first edited my Facebook profile to include my work and educational history. I learned how to use the privacy settings in order to safeguard my personal profile while being able to provide the essential professional information needed to present myself as a PhD researcher. Under the "About" tab, I linked my blog to this online space so that if a member of the public were to click on the tab, they could see that I have a blog and could visit it to find further information about the study. Moreover, I changed the privacy settings so that if interested individuals clicked on my personal profile, they would be able to immediately see that I am a PhD student but would be unable to access to my personal information or contacts. An example of the public Facebook profile I used is presented below:
I used different combinations of the following keywords: TESOL, teachers, ELT, race, native speaker, coloured, English language teaching, TEFL, ESL, ESOL and was able to find two different Facebook groups that had a small community of VEM-NESTs. I contacted the group administrators through the Facebook messaging service to introduce myself and to ask permission to join their group before advertising my research on their wall and before attempting contact their members. I needed to reassure the administrators that I was not trying to sell them anything and provided the PIS form and a link to my blog for further information. The administrators were very receptive and allowed me to join their
groups to contact members. Through my endeavours, I was able to recruit one further research participant.

At the time of this study the majority of participants were currently employed in private English language centres located in either South Korea or China and there was often a time lapse between email responses because the participants were working on a full-time basis and had different holiday schedules to the UK. In order to remain organised I used an Excel spreadsheet where I kept a record of my progress which included information such as dates of invitations sent, dates reply received, the date and time of interviews and a record of which documents that were drafted and sent. This provided an overview of what stage individual participants were at during the data generation phase. I worked with each participant individually and rarely had two individuals proceeding in the same timeframe. A copy of the full spreadsheet is found in Appendix C.

The way in which I approached potential research participants did not vary widely in terms of content but more in terms of how I contacted them in the first instance. In some instances, I made sure to mention our mutual acquaintance when introducing myself for the first time as a reminder that they gave permission for their contact details to be forwarded on. When there was no mutual connection involved it was necessary to use the in-app messaging function in LinkedIn and Facebook because email addresses are not readily made available under the privacy restrictions of the applications. I also could not attach documents to in-app messages and therefore had to resort to drafting an introductory message that sought to provide an overview of the study and an invitation to take part. The message I used as a template is presented below:

Dear __________,

My name is Eljee Javier and I'm a 2nd year PhD student currently studying at The University of Manchester with Dr. Richard Fay and Dr. Juup Selma.

I'm writing to inquire if you would be interested in participating in some research that I'm conducting. My study explores the status and professional identity of non-white EFL teachers who consider themselves “native-speakers” of English. I'm a Canadian-Filipino who spent 2 years in
Fuzhou, China teaching English and a further 6 abroad. My experiences as a visible ethnic minority EFL teacher have been the starting point of this study.

I have an official university letter which I can send you via email or post that presents an overview of the study in more detail. In brief, your involvement would be no more than 2 hours of your time (and not all at once).

Would you kindly let me know either way if you would be interested in participating. Furthermore if you have any questions please feel free to contact me or visit my website.

Regards,

Eljee Javier

Email: ejavier@me.com
Email: eljee.javier@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
Twitter: @eljeejavier
Web: http://www.eljeejavier.com

Figure 4.3: Letter of Invitation

Some interested individuals asked for more information whereas others were content to begin the research process. In each individual instance, I replied to all queries using the in-app messaging service until the participant was ready to exchange personal emails, which in practice took around two messages. Once email addresses were exchanged, I then sent them the PIS form and a copy of my narrative to begin Stage One. To facilitate this first stage, individuals who agreed to participate in this study were emailed two documents: the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) which included a signed consent form, and a PDF copy of my written narrative. As outlined in the PIS form I asked participants to read through all the documents and, when they were ready to proceed, to sign and return a copy of the consent form via email. In the instances where the signed consent form was returned, I replied with a reminder that if they had any questions or issues writing their narrative, to contact me. This reminder was sent as a way to continue the rapport in the time between receiving the consent form and receiving their narratives.
The participants were selected based on the information displayed on their LinkedIn profile. First, I used their photo to determine if they were a visible ethnic minority. Then, I checked their work history to see if they were currently employed in an English language teaching capacity and if they had previous teaching experience so that the participants would ideally have a wide range of experiences to draw upon. At the time of the study it was not easy to infer if they considered themselves native English speakers and therefore had to check by contacting potential participants individually.

The decision to use nine participants for my study was a pragmatic decision. Finding and recruiting participants took nearly eight months of online correspondence, which resulted in eleven individuals initially agreed to participant this study. However two individuals were unable to continue past Stage One. I chose not to recruit ‘replacements’ because I felt it would have taken too much time. Instead I carried on with the remaining participants and eventually completed each stage of the data generating process.

4.4.2 Experience of generating written narratives

The PIS forms and a copy of my story were sent simultaneously to expedite the recruitment process. It was very time-consuming to send numerous emails to potential participants who were not only located in different time zones but were busy professionals. The majority of the interested individuals returned their signed consent forms and their written narratives at the same time. The written narratives themselves were not uniform in their presentation. Some sent their replies in the body of an email whereas others were shared as a Word or a PDF document.

As a way of continuing to build rapport I chose to add written prompts in the form of three questions that were intended for the participants to use as guides should they be unsure where to begin. These question prompts were included in the PIS form that the participants were given as a reference for their participation in my study. Most participants wrote their stories in a 3-part structure similar to my own but they were by no means constrained by it. For example, P2 and P6 wrote about their background at length whereas P1, P4, P7, and P8 were comparatively brief, up to four or five sentences.
The length of P3 and P9’s background descriptions varied in-between. Others used an entirely different structure to mine. For example, P4 focused more on reflecting upon several critical incidents with very little background information provided whereas P5 was the only participant who directly used the question prompts from the PIS form and subsequently chose to present her narrative in a Q and A fashion.

4.5 Pre-Stage Two: Developing interview schedules

During this stage, I used the written narratives to develop interview schedules that were tailored to the individual participant. Questions were generated to sequentially follow the content of the written narratives. I chose this approach because I felt the written narratives did not provide me with enough information to adequately understand their VEM-NEST experiences and saw that interviewing the participants would provide the opportunity to expand on their written narratives. Additionally, the interview would allow the participants to meet me and gain the sense that there is an actual person behind the online interactions that were taking place, thereby further developing our rapport.

4.5.1 Rationale for using semi-structured interviews

The act of narration brings both the experience and the understanding of the experience as mediated by the audience. The majority of narrative research uses data generated between the researcher and the participant(s) in an interview setting, where when faced with a live audience the nature of the telling changes. Ochs and Capps (2011:24) recognise this as “tellership” referring to the extent and kind of involvement of conversation partners in the actual recounting of a narrative. In the exchange of written stories, the experiences are deliberated and crafted in to a carefully constructed presentation of identity. Although there is still the element of involvement between myself and the participants, the construction of our narratives occurred separately. This resulted in narratives that left the audience with questions about the content (e.g. Why did they choose to do this? What were they thinking when that happened?) but, with no opportunity to request clarification other than to return to the written format.

I used semi-structured interviews (Robson 2002; Mishler 1986) to create the opportunity for a different telling to take place which allowed the participant to build upon their
written narrative. I chose this particular format because I was able to predetermine the topics of discussion and create an interview schedule that was flexible enough during the interview to discuss additional topics that the participant chose to bring up.

It is important to note that the interview schedule was not intended solely for the purpose of eliciting further stories but was designed to clarify details within the narratives already shared and allow space for participants to generate further stories as the opportunity arose. In practice, this varied across participants depending on the nature of the interview itself and the extent to which they felt the need to disclose further information.

4.5.2 Process of developing interview questions from story content

First, each story was formatted into a Word file to make it easier to work with. Then during the first read through I wrote down any immediate questions and thoughts that arose using the in-text comment functionality of Word and highlighting the corresponding text. The questions during this first reading were roughly worded yet were indicative of my initial impressions and thoughts. For illustrative purposes I used Suri’s story to demonstrate the process of developing interview questions. Appendix D is the annotated version of her story that includes my rough notes and questions. This process of reading and note taking was repeated during which time I gained some further insight into the story content. My increased understanding of the story helped me eventually reword my notes into questions that I could include in a tentative interview schedule. The questions that were included in the interview schedule were chosen based on what sections of the story needed to be clarified.

For example, in Suri’s story her first paragraph describes her background, where she was born, how she moved around, where she was educated and how she came to the UK. She mentions several countries in this description and my initial notes focused on the area of language and language identity (e.g. “Languages learned? Affinity with any particular language? English "native" speaker?”). Since my focus is on VEM-NEST identity I wanted to ask her about her views what it means to be a "native speaker". This focus developed into an interview question: Do you see yourself as a native speaker? Suri’s final interview
schedule (see Appendix E) had questions that were in reference to specific parts of her written narrative and therefore the questions appeared in the order that they arose in her story.

The intention was to follow the sequence of topics while allowing space to discuss a variety of questions within the content. In general, the participants’ written narratives were loosely organised based on my three-part structure of Background, Critical Incident and Reflection and consequently the interview schedules followed suit. The questions were broadly grouped under topics of discussion, which allowed for variance within the topic. Under the broad term of “Background” I could ask a variety of questions. It was the content of the written narratives themselves that helped guide the interview because the participants chose to share what they deemed relevant and as the researcher, I chose to explore in more detail what was already made known.

4.6 Stage Two: Experience of carrying out individual interviews

Once I had received the written narrative from the participant I arranged to meet at a time convenient for them. The interview questions were not sent prior to the meeting unless the participant specifically requested it. This was to allow for more spontaneous answers to occur and contrast the content pre-prepared nature of the written narratives.

4.6.1 Technological preparation

The majority of participants were located in different parts of the world and I felt the voice over internet protocol software called Skype would be the most efficient and cost effective way to conduct the interviews. Moreover, I would be able to use digital recording software on my main computer rather than rely on external hardware, which would have been the case if landlines or mobile phones were utilised. Prior to carrying out the interviews, I tested two different internet call recording software programmes: Audio Hijack Pro and Call Recorder for Skype. Both programmes were run simultaneously so that if technical difficulties occurred with one application the other application, ideally, would continue recording. These recording software programmes were installed on my home computer because the timing of the interviews were often very early in the
morning and it was more convenient for me to conduct the interviews from my home office.

However, not all interviews were conducted over Skype. P1 and P2 were the only participants in the study with whom I conducted in person at their request because they were both located in the Northwest of England. The interviews took place in the quiet sections of local coffee shops because they would be public neutral spaces. In both instances I used my iPhone as my main recording device and an external digital recorder as a back up.

4.6.2 Individual interviews conducted

The first two interviews were with participants who were located in the UK because they were the first to reply with their written stories. For organisational purposes I allocated them labels P1 (participant 1) and P2 (participant 2) in the order their written narratives arrived. With the exception of P6, the rest of the participants were located either in China or South Korea and are presented in the order their written narratives were submitted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Country of birth</th>
<th>Self disclosed ethnicity</th>
<th>Current employment situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Higher Education language support - UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>Private language institute - UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Chinese - Canadian</td>
<td>Private language school - China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>African - American</td>
<td>Private language school - China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>African - American</td>
<td>Private language school - China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Black- British</td>
<td>Higher Education language support - UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Chinese - American</td>
<td>Private language school - China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>African - American</td>
<td>Private language school - South Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>African - American</td>
<td>Private language school - South Korea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Summary of research participants

This table implies that the participants’ stories arrived one right after another, spaced evenly, in a calm and orderly fashion. In reality this process occurred over several
months, with some participants submitting their stories in quick succession. I kept a spreadsheet (see Appendix C) that tracked the exact dates and times the different activities were carried out with which each participant and at what stage I managed my preparation accordingly. I worked with each participant individually and rarely had two individuals proceeding at the same time.

With regards to the interview, once an agreed time was set the participant and I met either via Skype or in person. In general, the interviews lasted about an hour and were usually audio only. During Skype interviews I followed the lead of the participant; if they were using a video connection then I did as well. If they chose not to, then I maintained audio contact only. Sometimes using audio only improved the internet connection speed and consequently made the audio recordings clearer. Sometimes it was the participants’ preference to use audio only during the interview.

4.7 Pre-stage Three: Processing the interview data for restorying purposes

This stage focused on transcribing the recorded interview data in preparation for restorying the data in Stage Three. As a general rule I aimed to finish transcribing an interview before developing questions for a new interview. This was to allow sufficient time for me to prepare the interview schedule for the new participant and to have a thorough understanding of their written narrative. In practice, I managed to do this for six out of the ten interviews which were scheduled several weeks apart. For the remaining four I did not transcribe their interviews immediately after they took place but focused on developing their interview questions because they were scheduled closely together.

The interviews were transcribed with the aid of the software programme Express Scribe because it has a straightforward interface, allowed for the use of transcription pedals and was able to play different file formats. Bearing in mind that meaning is constituted in very different ways with alternative transcriptions of the same talk (Riessman 2008), I chose to transcribe the interviews in such a way that omitted pauses, interjections (e.g. “M’kay” or “Yeah”) or speech disfluencies (e.g. “Um”, “Ah”), because they would have affected the overall presentation of the content. The only symbol used was the ellipse, indicating an unknown utterance. Furthermore, the majority of the interviews were transcribed
because the interview responses generally occurred in an order that followed the written narratives. The transcription also included time stamps, or when the questions and responses occurred to make specific sections easy to find when I needed to listen again. Once the initial transcription was completed, the interview was played back once more to check the accuracy of the transcription. An example of the raw transcription of Suri’s data is found in Appendix F.

4.8 Stage Three: The restorying process

This final stage of the data generation phase focused on developing a restoried narrative using the content of the written narratives and the data from the interviews. Restorying is used in narrative research as a way of organising data into a particular format. The final format is dependant on the processes undertaken and the extent to which the original data is manipulated. On one hand, some narrative approaches are considered representations because the final format is very different from the original data (Glesne 1997; Ellis and Flaherty 1992). For example, poetic renderings of narrative data aim to reveal the aesthetic qualities of the narratives through evoking a different aspect of the relationship between the reader and the narrator.

However, other restorying approaches focus on organising data into a narrative format. Interactions between people, observation field notes, and transcripts are some examples of data that may need to be put into a narrative format for the purpose of the analysis. This often involves a complex set of analytic procedures based on the central feature of “restorying” a story from the original raw data (Ollerenshaw and Creswell 2002:332). Different approaches to restorying focus on different “features”, such as “problemsolution” (e.g. Yucan and Ozcan 1997), particular elements of experience (e.g. Clandinin and Connelly 2000) or on structural forms (e.g. Riessman 2008).

For the analysis I focused on restorying the data chronologically as a way of identifying when and how different role identities were performed. This restorying approach situated the storytellers’ reflections on their experiences at particular points in the narrative. Placing the written and interview data into a chronologically organised
restoried narrative would present the participant’s experiences in a more coherent format and allow the analysis to focus on one data set rather than two.

I used a section from Suri’s complete restoried narrative (see Appendix G) to illustrate the restorying process described in the following sections.

4.8.1 Establishing the chronology of questions and answers in the interview data

The sequence of questions in the interview schedule was based on the content of the written narratives and by asking questions in this sequence contributed towards the overall organisation of the data. The development of the interview schedule closely followed the chronology of the written narrative and the interview responses generally followed the same sequence. The interview schedule, however, was semi-structured to allow both me, and the participants the space to raise topics during our conversation. Therefore some of the questions asked were not listed on the interview schedule but were questions related to the topic(s) raised by a previously scheduled question. In these instances I referred back to the interview schedule, located the original question, and compared the response of the original question to the response of the question(s) asked to see how closely the content was related.

The process of matching the interview questions with their corresponding answers in the transcription was a matter of finding what questions were asked in the interview schedule and finding the corresponding answers in the transcription. The following table uses Suri’s data and is an example of how I organised the interview data and the corresponding written data. The interview transcript (column 2) is presented alongside the scheduled interview questions (column 3). The scheduled interview questions were developed out of the content of the written narrative and therefore it was important that the relevant section of the written narrative (column 4) were noted. Line numbers (column 1) are included for easier referencing. The questions asked during the interview are highlighted in yellow. It is worth noting that the wording of the first scheduled question and the wording of the first question asked are slightly different yet both focus on eliciting Suri’s view of how she sees herself in relation to being (or not being) a native
A speaker of English. In Suri’s example, an additional question was asked immediately after the first question because it was directly related to the topic being discussed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line No.</th>
<th>Interview Transcription</th>
<th>Interview schedule question</th>
<th>Corresponding section of written narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001-004</td>
<td>I - (2:45) First question I have is with regards to your background, which is fascinating, and it’s quite varied. <strong>You mention yourself that you see yourself as a native speaker and could you elaborate on that, what do you mean and what’s your understanding of it?</strong></td>
<td>1: Do you see yourself as a native speaker of English? How do you define this aspect of your identity?</td>
<td>001 – 004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005</td>
<td>P1 - (3:01) Well, being Indian and in India – especially in the south where I’m from English has a very strong presence and if you’re a middle class sort of Indian which I think my family would be you tend to learn English and go to English medium schools so there’s always a parallel with your mother tongue and English. I’ve been speaking English since I was a kid so I can’t remember not speaking it. So in that sense I regard myself as a native speaker. So when I first came to the UK it wasn’t directly from India it was via y’know Africa and so again a lot of my childhood my schooling was in English medium sorts of schools in Africa. So it was a very British sort of education so when I arrived in the UK I suppose I had an accent but I was, it was my first language really so I never have any issues being a non-native speaker of English and international students had other issues, y’know the language wasn’t a problem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006</td>
<td>I - (4:09) Was there any sort of doubt growing up that “my English is English” or…?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>007</td>
<td>P1 - (4:13) No when I came to the UK I was, I realised that there was more to speaking English than just grammatically correctly or the vocabulary – it had to be plugged into the culture y’know so as an international student y’know if I went out with people I had no clue of television programmes they talked about and things like that or maybe some sort of pop references or, so. For example, Withnail and I was really popular when I was at uni. Do you know this programme?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
P1 - (4:46) You escaped! [laughs] It was one of the tests I had to pass actually before I actually got married to my husband! But, ah - references, y’know, so they, students would quote to each other things from this film that I had no idea that that was a quotation or when it fell or came into speech so even being completely fluent in English and considering English my first language I had problems with communication but y’know not because of the language but because of the cultural references.

I - (5:23) Then when it comes to, um, when you start talking about, there was an incident that you described in Spain, you mentioned before that incident that you always had interests from your students – like say in Africa – with regards to being Indian and an English teacher. Could you clarify what they mean by interested?

P1 - (5:41) Yeah, well there is a strong sort of history and strong links between India and a lot of countries in Africa because when a lot of the countries became independent in Africa, for example, like Zambia. Because, they, they weren’t politically, aligned to the United States or Russia at the time it was very much a move to sort of political affiliations. They belonged to what was known as the ‘non-aligned’ movement, and that was started by India. We would just be strong countries that weren’t sort of gonna say “I’m a friend of the US” or “I’m a friend of Russia” or the Soviet Union rather but that they would be non-aligned so there’s a huge group of mostly ex-colonies of the UK that belonged to this “NAM”, non-aligned movement. The short story is that these newly independent countries in Africa called for teachers from India so my parents were both school teachers and they got jobs in schools in these newly independent countries to sort of build up the education system. And so people in Africa are very used to seeing Indian people and in like some countries, like South Africa and Kenya, there are really huge populations of Indians who came over before independence so in the 1900s y’know to work on the railways, to work, and so generations have grown up in these countries. So in South Africa if you met an Indian in South Africa then probably their great-great grandfathers were probably born in...
Table 4.3: Example of matching questions to answers in transcription

This process was carried out until the whole interview transcript was placed in a table and was done in preparation for pulling together both sets of data in the next step.

4.8.2 Weaving the content of both data sets into a restoried narrative text

The restoried narrative was intended to be a readable text that was a combination of the participants’ written narrative data and their interview transcriptions. The process of building a restoried narrative was akin to weaving a tapestry that involved taking different “threads” of content from each data set and pulling them together to create one detailed picture. Overall there were three stages I used as a guideline for processing the content from each data set. The first stage identified the sequence of major events within the written narrative to act as an initial outline because it provided a time-based structure for the content. The second stage sought to identify content that was relevant to the initial outline, and bring text from both data sets into one document. The last stage focused on developing coherence within the content of the restoried narrative through carefully editing the content to reflect the relevance between and among topics presented.

First, the sequence of events in the written narrative was used as a rough outline for the restoried narrative. Time and place were aspects that situated the written and interview content into a specific context so that topics that arose could be placed more easily within the restoried outline. For example, in Suri’s restoried narrative there are seven different events presented in the first paragraph of her written narrative. Table 4.4 indicates where the events occurred:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Written narrative content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Well, seriously, both my parents were born and raised in India (Kerala). They were both school teachers and got jobs teaching at high schools in newly independent countries in Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>So I was born in Zambia. I spent my childhood moving around a lot – Zambia, India and Zimbabwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Came to the UK at the age of 18 to go to Uni. Until the age of 24 I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4: Example of creating an outline from written narrative content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>lived/studied here in the UK...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4 | ...then because of a career in EFL lived in various countries (mostly Africa, but also S. America and Asia)...
| 5 | ...until my marriage in 2001. |
| 6 | After a year in Spain... |
| 7 | ...I moved back to the UK and have lived here ever since. |

In an interpretative move, I decided events 1 and 2 could be combined into one event because they dealt with the same topic (e.g. where her and her family members were born) whereas events 3 - 7 describe different stages of her life and were left as separate events. This process of combining events based on similar topics and time scales demonstrates some of the initial decisions made when creating a tentative outline for the restoried narrative. The table above provides a rather linear timeline of Suri’s life events, which was used as a reference when considering where the content of the interview data might fit.

Based on my decisions I combined events 1 and 2 to create the introductory paragraph of her restoried narrative:

Well, seriously, both my parents were born and raised in India (Kerala). They were both school teachers and got jobs teaching at high schools in newly independent countries in Africa. So I was born in Zambia. I spent my childhood moving around a lot – Zambia, India and Zimbabwe.

The second stage focused on the process of comparing the interview answers to the content of the written narrative. This was a cyclical process of identifying topics that were closely related and reorganising the data to reflect this relationship. Sometimes the interview answers focused on a single topic which made it easier to match the interview answer with the written data. More often, several topics were brought up in one interview turn and decisions were made as to what part of the answer matched more closely with what topic in the written narrative. The location of the interview questions played a key role in locating which interview answers were related to what section of the
narrative. This relationship was not always straightforward because of the discursive nature of the answers, but it provided a useful reference point.

For example, the question “Do you see yourself as a native speaker of English? How do you define this aspect of your identity?” was asked because she did not include this detail in the introduction in her written narrative. I had anticipated that Suri’s answer would focus on topics related to native speaker and identity. However, her answer included three different topics. First she focuses on her experiences learning English:

> Well, being Indian and in India – especially in the south where I’m from English has a very strong presence and if you’re a middle class sort of Indian which I think my family would be you tend to learn English and go to English-medium schools so there’s always a parallel with your mother tongue and English. I’ve been speaking English since I was a kid so I can’t remember not speaking it. So in that sense I regard myself as a native speaker.

She then switched topics and described how she came to the UK via Africa:

> So when I first came to the UK it wasn’t directly from India it was via y’know Africa and so again a lot of my childhood my schooling was in English-medium sorts of schools in Africa.

Then, within the same interview turn, she focused on her experiences when she first arrived in the UK as a university student:

> So it was a very British sort of education, so when I arrived in the UK I suppose I had an accent but I was, it was my first language really so I never have any issues being a non-native speaker of English and international students had other issues, y’know the language wasn’t a problem.

After identifying the different topics in her initial interview answer I began the third stage, which focused on creating coherence through weaving together different sections to create Suri’s restored narrative. Starting with an introductory paragraph identified via the rough outline, I included the first topic of her interview answer because it was focused on her family history. The final version is presented below, with Suri’s written narrative text in blue and the relevant section of her interview in black:

> Well, seriously, both my parents were born and raised in India (Kerala). They were both school teachers and got jobs teaching at high schools in newly independent countries in Africa. So I was born in Zambia. I spent my childhood moving around a lot – Zambia, India and Zimbabwe. Well, being Indian and in India – especially in the south where I’m from, English has a very strong presence and if you’re a middle class sort of Indian, which I think my family would be, you tend to learn English and go to English medium schools so there’s always a parallel with your mother tongue and English. I’ve been speaking English since I was a kid so I can’t remember not speaking it. So, in that sense I regard myself as a native speaker.
The process of developing the next paragraph of the restored narrative involved careful consideration of the content in both the interview transcript and the written narrative. The tentative outline of events became the organising feature during this process, and I carefully considered not only when events took place but also what detail was relevant to that event. For example, in Suri’s written narrative the next major event was arriving in the UK at age 18. However, the next section of Suri's interview transcript focuses on coming to the UK not through India but via Africa. I chose to begin the next section with the interview data because this fit the gap in her timeline and was related to the content of the paragraph in her restored narrative.

Additionally, content from different parts of her interview could be considered relevant to the topics covered in the restored narrative. On this subject, Suri talks about the history of India and the political affiliations it has with Africa a little later in her interview. Since the first paragraph in her restored narrative focuses on living in different areas of the world, I felt combining the two interview sections into a new paragraph would present a more detailed description of Suri’s view of the two countries she calls home. The text in green appeared very early on in the interview as part of Suri’s answer to my first question. The red text is an interview answer to a different question, "...you mentioned before that incident that you always had interests from your students – like say in Africa – with regards to being Indian and an English teacher. Could you clarify what they mean by interested?" which was intended to focus on the reactions of her students. Instead, Suri chose to discuss the historical links between India and Africa and, as such, I felt this was a good section to include as part of creating a more detailed presentation of Suri’s background.

Closely related to Suri’s background is yet another section of her interview in which she returns to the topic of the relationship between her family and her African home. The sections in green focus on Suri, the interview content, coloured purple, was a way of returning the discussion back to Suri herself and how she, as an Indian teacher in Africa, was perceived. The following text is the final version of the second paragraph of Suri’s restored narrative:
So when I first came to the UK it wasn’t directly from India it was via Africa and so again a lot of my childhood my schooling was in English-medium sorts of schools in Africa. Well, there is a strong sort of history and strong links between India and a lot of countries in Africa because of when a lot of the countries became independent in Africa - for example like Zambia - because they weren’t politically aligned to the United States or Russia. At the time it was very much a move to sort of political affiliations. They belonged to what was known as the “non-aligned” movement, and that was started by India. We would just be strong countries that weren’t sort of gonna say “I’m a friend of the US” or “I’m a friend of Russia” or “the Soviet Union” but that they would be non-aligned so there’s a huge group of mostly ex-colonies of the UK that belonged to this “NAM, non-aligned movement.” The short story is that these newly independent countries in Africa called for teachers from India so my parents were both school teachers and they got jobs in schools in these newly independent countries to sort of build up the education system. And so people in Africa are very used to seeing Indian people and in some countries, like South Africa and Kenya, there are really huge populations of Indians who came over before independence so in the 1900s, y’know to work on the railways, and so generations have grown up in these countries. So in South Africa if you met an Indian in South Africa then probably their great-great grandparents were probably born in South Africa and the same in Kenya. Now my family don’t belong to that sector of the population but it just shows that in Africa students are used to seeing Indians and used to seeing Indians in teaching jobs and higher professional sort of jobs. So they were always interested in my story but they never questioned my validity of being a teacher or of being a native speaker of English.

Weaving together sections of Suri’s written and interview data required a good awareness of the topics she covered in addition to where these topic were located in their respective data sets. Identifying similar topics within different sections of text was a cyclical process that involved a flexible yet organised view to managing the data. On one level there was the process of identifying sections of data that had a similar topic focus and weaving them together into a coherent paragraph. At times I needed to rearrange the data to enable the text to be more readable. For example, the next paragraph in Suri’s restored narrative was initially arranged in this way:

_Came to the UK at the age of 18 to go to uni._ So it was a very British sort of education. So when I arrived in the UK I suppose I had an accent but I was, it was my first language really so I never have any issues being a non-native speaker of English and international students had other issues, y’know the language wasn’t a problem.

The paragraph was pulled together using the next event in tentative outline of her written data (blue) and the final topic of her first answer (black). The paragraph, however, does not read well and therefore I rearranged the text and added a pronoun in order to make the text flow:

So it was a very British sort of education. _I came to the UK at the age of 18 to go to uni,_ so when I arrived in the UK I suppose I had an accent but I was - it was my first language really so I never have any issues being a non-native speaker of English and international students had other issues, y’know the language wasn’t a problem.
As much as possible I avoided adding text such as adjectives or nouns because I felt doing so would have substantially changed the meaning. Instead I added text, such as pronouns or conjunctions, when it was necessary to convey a more coherent presentation of the content.

On another level, the overall coherence was developed so that the text could be understood as a story that needed consideration. Coherence in a written text often requires the use of signposting as way to transition between topics. However, there was a lack of signposting in the data, which hindered the flow whilst reading the text. To address this issue, headings were added as a way of signalling to the reader the content of a section. During this process what proved useful was that some of the participants chose to write their narratives using the structure "Background, Critical Incident and Reflection" as a general guide and this structure enabled me to decide on the headings that were appropriate for the particular section. By and large this was the only text I added to the restoried narratives. In Suri’s example, I used “Growing up in different countries” as the first heading in her restoried narrative. Further examples of headings can be found in Suri’s complete restoried narrative (see Appendix G).

4.8.3 Sharing with the participants their restoried narratives

A final version of the restoried narrative was emailed to the respective participants to check the participants were satisfied with the content of the restoried narratives and to provide the opportunity for request any changes to be made. However, half of the participants did not reply, whereas the ones that did chose not to make any changes to their story. Upon reflection, the lack of response may have been due to a variety of factors, including the amount of time passed between email correspondences or lack of time by the participant. In each non-responsive instance, a reminder email was sent. I chose not to pursue a more detailed reply at this point because I felt I had asked enough from them and should they feel compelled in the future to provide more feedback they have the means to contact me. The participants that did reply were sent a short thank you and the invitation to email me if they had any further questions was reiterated.
4.9 Processing restoried narratives used for data analysis

There were nine restoried narratives used for data analysis. I used the majority of the content in each individual restoried narrative. Particular emphasis was placed on analysing the events within the restoried narratives as well as any text relevant to the event itself.

The restoried narratives were processed using Word into a four-column table in preparation for the analysis. The first column contained line numbers for ease of reference, the second column had the text of the restoried narratives which included the section headings. The third and fourth column were spaces to add notes during the particular stage of the process of analysis. A detailed description of the process of analysis is presented in Chapter Five.

4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter presented the rationale for my methodological approach and presented a detailed research report on the processes undertaken during the data generation stages. This included a detailed account of the process of restorying narrative data from two different data sets, using an extract from one of my participants to illustrate each stage of the process. This chapter concluded with a brief description of how the restoried narratives were prepared for analysis. The next chapter presents the analytical framework used to analyse the restoried narratives.
Chapter Five: Analytical framework and process of analysis

5.1 Overview of chapter

This chapter presents the analytical framework which I used to examine what role identities were performed in the restoried narratives and a description of the process of analysis. My analytical framework is informed by Labov and Waletsky’s (1967) structural approach from which I used their conception of story elements to create my own set: Orientation, Central Complication, Resolution, Event role identities, and Narrative role identities. My story elements were used to identify specific events within an individual restoried narrative. Once the events were pinpointed my story elements were then used to identify on what role identities were performed and how they were performed.

In my study there were two stages of analysis. The first stage used my story element framework to identify what events occurred within each restoried narrative, what role identities were performed, and how they were performed. In total, there were nine restoried narratives separately analysed using my story elements. For demonstrative purposes, in this chapter I used my story to illustrate how my story elements were operationalised. The findings of the first stage of the analysis are presented in Chapter Six. The second stage of the analysis process focused on synthesising the findings of the nine restoried narratives to identify the most salient themes. The findings of stage two are presented in Chapter Seven.

5.2 Presentation of my analytical approach

5.2.1 Summary of Labov and Waletzky’s structural framework

The first step in the analysis was to develop a way of identifying where performed role identities occurred within the restoried narratives. This involved examining the structural elements of a story and for this purpose I developed a framework drawn from Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) structural approach. Their approach provided an analytical perspective on how a story is structured which emphasised the functions of different elements within a story (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). According to Labov and Waletzky, well-formed stories
are made from a common set of six elements that are attributed to specific clauses in a story, summarised in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story element</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Summary of the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Information about the setting (e.g. time, place, situation, participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complicating Action</td>
<td>What actually happened; What happened next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>What the events mean to the narrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>How it ended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>Return the perspective to the present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5.1: Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) structural model of narrative form*

Labov and Waletzky’s analytical approach helped explain how the different functions of story elements provide meaning. However their framework did not fit the purposes of my analysis, which was to examine specific performed role identities in the restoried narratives. Their approach was too restricting because it needed a clause-centred presentation to analyse the data. Instead, I used elements from their analytical approach as a means of organising the content of the restoried narratives to enable a greater focus on specific role identities.

5.2.2 Development of my story elements

For the purpose of identifying where specific events occurred in the participants’ restoried narratives, I adapted Labov and Waletzky’s analytical approach to create my own set of story elements. First, I took four elements from their framework (Orientation, Complication Action, Evaluation and Resolution) and adapted them to suit my analytical framework. This resulted in creating my own set of story elements summarised in the following table:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Element</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Information about the setting: time, place, situation, participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Complicating Action</td>
<td>Main problem or issues of the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event role identities</td>
<td>What the narrator thought of their performance at the time of the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative role identities</td>
<td>Insights shared situated outside of specific events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>Conclusion resulting from or related to the Central Complication(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: My story elements informed by Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) analytical framework

First, the elements Orientation, Central Complicating Action and Resolution are considered elements that map out the organisational aspects of an event. The evaluative aspect of Labov and Waletzky’s framework was adapted into two separate narrator perspectives discussed in section 5.2.3. The following is a description of the contextual story elements.

Orientation: this term referred to the key contextual information (e.g. location, time, country, participants) needed to situate the event in a specific time and place for the benefit of the intended audience. In some instances the context had a profound influence on what actions the participant chose to take and was therefore important to take into consideration.

Central Complicating Action: instead of "Complicating Action", which was considered as occurrences (e.g. actions or words) that move the action forward, I used "Central Complicating Action” to indicate the main problems or issues that the participant encountered during a specific event that included actions taken or words spoken. Identifying this story element enabled me to explore why it was a problem in the first place, which can reveal the underlying role norms that regulate how role identities were performed.

Resolution: this referred to a kind of conclusion that was reached within the event. The participant took some action that yielded some kind of result. This result may have spurred further action within the event or may have drawn the event to a close. The
conclusion does not necessarily mean the participant agreed with the outcome nor does it mean the issue was resolved.

Identifying these story elements enabled me to see where a specific situation began and where it ended. This allowed me to identify the specific events that occurred within the restoried narratives from the rest of the story content. This distinction proved useful because I was able to compare the participants’ insights from different perspectives.

5.2.3 **Performed role identities as an evaluative story element**

The three previous story elements focused on the organisational aspects of the content. I adapted the evaluative aspect of Labov and Waletzky’s analytical approach to focus on the performed role identities of the participants. To reiterate, the evaluative element of a story demonstrates what meaning the events had for the participant. According to Labov (1972: 366), the evaluative content is “the means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative, its raison d’être, why it was told and what the narrator was getting at”. To this end, my analytical framework considers performed role identities as the evaluative element of the story. The performance of a role identity required the participants to make decisions based on their assessment of a specific situation so that their performance may be accepted by the intended audience. By considering performed role identities as an evaluative element I was able to identify the participants’ evaluation of their context as well as their role identity performances as revealed in their restoried narratives.

Performed role identities were embedded within the restoried narratives and I developed two narrator perspectives to identify where they occurred. The first perspective was called “Event role identities” (ERI) to indicate performed role identities that were situated in a specific event. The ERI focus on the participant’s views of their performance during a specific situation in which the immediacy of their evaluations provided a particular perspective. The second perspective is termed “Narrative role identities” (NRI). The participant often had further insights that were retrospectively understood that revealed their evaluation of the situation and/or their performance. The participants’ restoried narrative also included meta-commentary related to the specific event yet situated
outside of the actual occurrence. The combination of both perspectives provided a fuller, more detailed overview of the role identities the participant performed.

The process of analysis took place in two stages. The first stage used my story element approach to identify what events occurred within each restoried narrative, that was the central complicating action that took place within the event, what role identities were performed and how they were performed. The second stage examined the findings from across all nine restoried narratives and focused on synthesising the analysis to develop salient themes.

5.3 Stage One: Process of analysis within individual restoried narratives

This section presents a detailed description of the process of identifying role identities within individual restoried narratives. In total, there were nine individual restoried narratives analysed which were coded one at a time to maintain coherence within the analysis. However, for presentation purposes, extracts from my story were used in the subsequent sections to illustrate how the coding process was operationalised.

5.3.1 Overview of the coding process

The process of analysis took place in four stages that involved coding the restoried narratives with colour. First, the restoried narrative text was placed in a table to make it easier to manage the coding process (see Table 5.7 for example). The table had four columns in this order: line numbers, story content, event role identity notes and narrative role identity notes. The following colour codes were used to highlight the text to create a visual “map” of the story elements.
The aim of the first stage was to identify where events occurred within the restoried narrative. I did not take a clause-centred approach because I did not need that level of detail for my analysis. Instead I used a content-based approach that generally considered whole sentences when coding the different story elements.

Secondly, I focused on identifying the story elements of orientation, central complicating action and resolution because these elements situated the event in a particular time and place. Thirdly, I set out to identify the ERI within each event and coloured the relevant text accordingly. Lastly, I coded the NRI, first focusing on text directly related to events, and then coded text that was relevant to any role identities identified. I completely coded one restoried narrative before moving on to the next in order to retain a sense of coherence in understanding the content. Moreover, the restoried narratives were coded in the order they were completed.

Sections 5.3.2 - 5.3.5 describe the coding process in more detail and are exemplified with extracts from my story to illustrate the procedures undertaken. The table format presented was the same format used to code the restoried narratives. However, for the purposes of illustrating the coding process, individual columns are presented one at a time.

5.3.2 The coding process used to identify events

This first stage focused on coding the event by identifying when the event began and when it ended. This stage was the first “pass” at coding the participants’ restoried narratives in which the story elements used were noted in the column “ERI” because the
notes were related to role identities in events. I started with Orientation because it was the story element that was the most straightforward to find.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Extract from my story</th>
<th>ERI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>089</td>
<td>This was only the third lesson that I’d had with this group of students, during which I would often have a few latecomers joining the class for the first time. Consequently they would miss the pre-prepared speech I often gave at the beginning of each course and, upon arrival, would be confused with my appearance. Usually, during these instances I would let the other students inform their classmates about me. It took the pressure off me to try to validate my position as their teacher, which was relief in many ways. I eavesdropped on their conversation, which took place in Chinese, and usually went along the lines of: New Student: “I thought our teacher was a native speaker.” Current Student: “She is a native speaker.” New Student: “But she looks Chinese!” Current Student: “She’s not! She’s Canadian.”</td>
<td>O - new class, new group of students CCA: (O) NEST expectations not met R - other students helped me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>090</td>
<td></td>
<td>CCA - NS and appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>091</td>
<td></td>
<td>CCA - NS vs. NNS = Chinese (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>092</td>
<td></td>
<td>O - situated back then R - let other students defend/explain my NEST</td>
</tr>
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<td>093</td>
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<td>094</td>
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<td>107</td>
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<td>108</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4: An extract of my story analysed to identify events

For example, references to time and place were key and lines 089 - 091 presented information that situated the start of the event (This was only the third lesson…), who was involved (e.g. myself, a new group of EFL students), situation specific details (…a few latecomers joining the class for the first time) and any reference to time (At the time…).

I moved on to identifying the Central Complicating Action (CCA) of the situation. This story element is different to Labov and Waletzky’s Complicating Action, in that it focuses on an issue or problem the participant encounters which directly affects the way they go about performing their role identities. In my story lines 094 indicates the CCA […[the students] were confused with my appearance]. However, the remainder the sentence (lines 092 - 093) described particular details of the context that enabled the CCA to occur and therefore was considered as part of the CCA. In other words, the students were only
able to become confused with my appearance because they missed my prepared speech at the beginning of the course. Lines 099 and 101 were also coded CCA because they were closely related in terms of topic.

After the CCA was coded I then turned to identifying the Resolution (R) of the event. This story element is indicative of some kind of reaction that resulted from the CCA. In my story, I tentatively coded lines 093 - 096 because they were my response to the confusion felt by students meeting me for the first time and coded lines 105 - 106 because they were are related response.

5.3.3 The coding process used to identify “Event Role Identities”

This next step focused on identifying what “Event role identities” (ERIs) were performed during the event and how they were being performed. This involved highlighting text that was relevant to a specific role identity which included descriptions, feelings, opinions or actions taken.

This extract of my story was set in an EFL classroom in China. Based on the context I could expect the role identity performed was a NEST role identity. When coding the ERI in the text I looked to identify the ways I was performing as a NEST.

Part of identifying the ERI was re-evaluating the initial coding to differentiate contextual details and the performance of specific role identities. In this example I was re-evaluating the initial coding to specifically identify when I was performing my NEST role identity. Originally lines 093 - 097 were considered part of the resolution but upon consideration, lines 094 - 097 were coded ERI because it was my reflections upon my decision to allow my students explain my NEST identity to the newcomers. Similarly, lines 104 - 105 were also re-coded as ERI because they were closely related to my previous reflections in lines 094 - 097.
This was only the third lesson that I’d had with this group of students, during which I would often have a few latecomers joining the class for the first time. Consequently they would miss the pre-prepared speech I so often gave at the beginning of each course and, upon arrival, were confused with my appearance. Usually, during these instances I would let the other students inform their classmates about me. It took the pressure off me to try to validate my position as their teacher, which was relief in many ways. I eavesdropped on their conversation, which took place in Chinese, and usually went along the lines of:

New Student: “I thought our teacher was a native speaker!”
Current Student: “She is a native speaker.”
New Student: “But she looks Chinese!”
Current Student: “She’s not! She’s Canadian.”

At the time I wasn’t really aware of the implications that this conversation had, other than feeling that I’d rather let my students defend my right to be there at the front of the classroom than repeating my speech over again.

Key: O=orientation; CC=central complication; R=resolution; ERI= event role identity

Table 5.6: An extract of my story analysed to identify ERI

5.3.4 The coding process used to identify “Narrative Role Identities” related to events

The “Narrative role identities” (NRI) was the second perspective that was present in the restoried narratives. The participant often had further insights that were retrospectively understood which revealed their evaluation of the situation and what they thought about the performance of their role identities. The participant’s restoried narrative included meta-commentary related to the specific event yet situated outside of the actual occurrence.

The extract below is from an earlier section of my story that is a clearer presentation of the relationship between the NRI and the ERI in a specific situation. What is different about this extract is that it is not situated in a specific time, such as during a particular class as in the previous example, but instead it is an overall description of a specific situation that had identifiable story elements. Lines 052 - 055 first presented the NRI perspective of my NEST role identity. I began with sharing the fact that I needed to
mentally prepare myself to meet a new class and I explained why I believed this was necessary. This meta-commentary provided the necessary background information to introduce the problem I regularly faced, “...the challenge of, essentially, proving my credentials as their English language teacher” (line 055 - 056). The insights shared from the NRI perspective and the articulation of the CC provided the necessary introduction of the ensuing description of the event in which my performance as a NEST was coded as ERI because it was enacted within the situation. The result of my performance is coded as the resolution. My reflections upon this event are coded as NRI because these insights on my ERI occurred after the events had taken place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Extract from my story</th>
<th>ERI</th>
<th>NRI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>052</td>
<td>One of the ways I used to address the issue was to first to expect the mixed reactions of my students whenever I started a new class. In doing so I was better able to prepare myself both emotionally and practically for the challenge of, essentially, proving my credentials as their English language teacher. Therefore, part of my routine when starting a brand new class, was to launch into a mini-monologue about myself. I would usually share some anecdote about my life in Canada and present it at a normal speaking rate in order to demonstrate that I was a native speaker of English. As soon as I finished my students immediately became more willing and open to the idea of accepting me as their English teacher. In a way, it was my attempt to “attack first” by establishing who I am before any questions were raised.</td>
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<td>053</td>
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<td>063</td>
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Key: O= orientation; CC= central complication; R= resolution

Table 5.7: Extract 2 of my story analysed to identify Narrative Role Identities

5.3.5 The coding process used to identify “Narrative Role Identities” throughout

The final stage in the coding process involved identifying text throughout the restoried narrative that were descriptive of the participants’ performance of their role identities. The descriptions included opinions of their previous performances of specific role identities, commentaries about the norms that regulate the way their role identities were perceived, and further insights into what specific role identities mean to them.

The following quotations are extracts from my story, that I considered role identities presented from the NRI perspective. The first quotation is in relation to how I defined the NES role identity:
My parents had a strong influence in my cultural upbringing. From an early age I was taught the "rules" of how to conduct myself in Filipino society. However, my parents also wanted their daughter to be a "full" Canadian and insisted that I grew up speaking only English as a way to integrate into Canadian society with more ease. I wasn’t encouraged to learn Tagalog (Philippine national dialect) or Ilocano (my mother’s dialect) for fear that it would be a hindrance to my development as a Canadian (lines 011 - 018).

In my story, the NES role identity was synonymous to being Canadian. My parents shared this view and encouraged me to learn English as my first language so that I may become a “proper” Canadian.

At the time I couldn’t understand what my students were saying to each other but it was clear from their facial expressions that they didn’t feel comfortable with me as their teacher. From the outset it became apparent that the majority of students assumed that a native speaker would not only be from Canada (or the UK, USA or Australia), but that they would also be White. This was a huge eye-opener for me because I hadn’t thought that my ethnicity would be an issue, much less a liability. For a while I felt extremely frustrated about my situation because I couldn’t find an easy way to cope or to find a solution. In many ways I also felt isolated. My colleagues were very supportive and encouraged me along the way, yet, they didn’t share the same anxieties as I did simply because they didn’t look like a local (lines 038 - 050).

This quotation focused on what I thought about NEST role identity and the realisation that my racial identity affected the perception of my performed NEST role identity. In this quote I shared my feelings of frustration and anger because my students did not accept me as a NEST, and my sense of isolation, brought about because my colleagues were unable to relate to my experiences because they did not look Chinese.

And so, as a result, I’ve been using my Canadianness as a way of dealing with questions posed about my native speaker credentials. But I’m not happy using this reason because it doesn’t really challenge the assumptions that people have about what it means to be a native speaking English language teacher. I use Canadian identity to justify to others that I’m a native speaker of English and therefore uphold the very stereotype that causes me grief in the first place. By doing this I benefit professionally at the expense of others by distancing myself from being associated with being “just” a local teacher (lines 154 - 162).

This quotation focuses on how I performed my VEM-NEST role identity and what I thought about my performance of continuing to associate NEST with Canadian. There was a transition taking place which demonstrated that in order to be allowed to perform as a VEM-NEST, I first needed to become accepted as a NEST and therefore my approach was to highlight my Canadian identity.
5.3.6 *Presentation of findings from the first stage of the analysis*

The findings of this stage are presented for each participant without their restoried narratives in Chapter Six. Instead each example begins with a brief description of the participant and a summary of their restoried narrative in order to provide the necessary background information to introduce the reader to the participant. This introduction is followed by a description of what role identities were performed, and how the particular participant chose to perform these role identities. Where necessary, relevant quotes from their restoried narrative were added to illustrate the points made.

5.4 **Second stage: Process of analysis across data sets**

The second stage examined the findings from across all nine restoried narratives and focused on synthesising the analysis in order to summarise the answer to the research questions. In preparation for this stage of the analysis I first entered the participants’ events into an excel spreadsheet and added columns corresponding to each research question. During my analysis I made note of any commonalities found between the participants’ events. From the first stage analysis I was already very familiar with the content of the restoried narratives and was able to discern what events may have aspects in common. To check my hunches, I referred back to the individual’s restoried narratives to clarify my insights. This was a cyclical process of re-reading and comparing content. The findings from this second stage are presented in Chapter Seven.

5.5 **Conclusion**

In this chapter I presented the analytical framework I used to examine how role identities were performed in the restoried narratives. The analytical framework is informed by Labov and Waletsky’s structural approach to story analysis from which I adapted their conception of story elements to include the following: Orientation, Central Complication, Resolution, Event role identities, and Narrative role identities. I used these elements as a way of identifying specific events within a restoried narrative of how the participants performed their role identities. Once these specific performances were identified I set out to make sense of what this means in light of my research questions and present my findings of the individual restoried narratives in the next chapter.
Chapter Six: Analysis of restored narratives

6.1 Overview of chapter

This chapter presents the findings from the first analytical stage that analysed nine individual restored narratives. The research questions are repeated here to remind the reader of the focus of this study:

*What VEM-NEST related events occurred in the participants’ restored narrative?*

*How did the participants perform their role identities during these events?*

*How do the participants understand VEM-NEST as a role identity?*

The first question focused on identifying key events in an individual’s restored narrative that held some significance related to their VEM-NEST identities. The second question focused on the actual performance of the participant’s role identities during a specific event. Questions one and two were directly addressed in this chapter. The last question is addressed in Chapter Seven, which focused on synthesising the participants’ understandings of VEM-NEST as a role identity.

The restored narratives were not included in the chapter due to word count limitations. Instead, the analysis begins with a participant profile to provide the necessary background information to introduce the reader to the participant. Following the participant description is the presentation of the key events that demonstrated the way the participant performed their role identities. Not all the events identified in a restored narrative were included because some events were considered more relevant to answering the research questions than others. The text from an individual event was quoted in full where possible, and presented in a table. The content was then labelled with the corresponding story elements of my analytical framework. Accompanying each table is the analysis of the role identities performed and meta-commentary related to the event.
6.2 Suri’s profile

Suri considers herself as a person of Indian descent but she did not define her identity solely in terms of locality. She considers herself multicultural and multilingual and, as such, had a very fluid approach to defining her identity. She was born in Zambia, yet moved between Zambia, India and Zimbabwe throughout her childhood. In her restored narrative she explained the history of Indian migration to Africa as a way of presenting a more nuanced picture of what being Indian meant to her. For example, she considered herself Indian despite not being born in India. Her family history was an example of how immigrants to Africa had contributed to her experiences with multicultural/multilingual societies.

Suri speaks several different languages but she considers herself a native speaker of English because she has been speaking English since childhood. She grew up in former British colonies and received a British-influenced education in English-medium schools. Later, she attended university in the UK.

Suri is the most experienced teacher out of the group of participants and has taught in several different countries. She has a wealth of experience which she used to reflect upon her VEM-NEST role identity.

Using the adapted approach to code the elements of a story, I present five key events in Suri’s story, labelled Events A through to E.

6.2.1 Background introduction to Event A

I’ve been speaking English since I was a kid so I can’t remember not speaking it. So, in that sense I regard myself as a native speaker. So when I first came to the UK it wasn’t directly from India it was via Africa, and so again a lot of my childhood and my schooling was in English-medium sorts of schools in Africa (lines 009-013).

In the prelude to Event A, Suri explained why she believed she was a NES. She did not attribute her NES role identity by country of birth but rather through speaking English from a young age and through being educated in English-medium schools. This was a departure from the commonly held view that NES come from Inner Circle countries and
Suri, very early on in her story, made it clear that she was of Indian descent as well as a NES. This combination was one that Suri discussed throughout her story as a way of explaining to the reader that a NES, and later on, a NEST can be from India.

### 6.2.2 Event A: Being a NES international student in the UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>So it was a very British sort of education. I came to the UK at the age of 18 to go to uni, so when I arrived in the UK I suppose I had an accent but I was - it was my first language really so I never have any issues being a non-native speaker of English and international students had other issues, y’know the language wasn’t a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI/Orientation</td>
<td>I realised that there was more to speaking English than just grammatically correctly or the vocabulary – I had to be plugged into the culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>So as an international student if I went out with people I had no clue about television programmes they talked about and things like that or maybe some sort of pop references or so. For example, “Withnail and I” was really popular when I was at uni. So they – students - would quote to each other things from this film that I had no idea that was a quotation or when it fell or came into speech …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>… so even being completely fluent in English and considering English my first language I had problems with communication but, y’know not because of the language but because of the cultural references.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Event A in Suri’s story

This event began with “it was a very British sort of education” that signalled to the audience the type of educational system Suri had experienced up to this point and how she continued her British education by attending university in the UK. This seemingly minor sentence signalled that she was a different type of international student who would not have faced language problems because she was educated in an English-medium system. She was aware she had an accent that would have marked her out as an international student but apart from that, in her words, “language wasn’t a problem”. She realised that her NES performance needed to be adapted when she moved to the UK.
to study because she discovered that there was more to being a NES than linguistic accuracy. During this event she emphasised she was a different sort of international student because she was a NES and did not experience language problems as other NNES international students.

The next sentence saw Suri switch to the NRI perspective in which she shared her retrospective understanding of the event and simultaneously introduced the main problem she faced, described in the next section labelled CCA. The CCA, in sum, was Suri’s inability to understand the popular culture references that her fellow students, presumably British students, mentioned in passing conversation. She gave a specific example (“Withnail and I”) of a film that she was unaware of. As a NES Suri still encountered communication problems because she was not aware of the “cultural” knowledge needed to understand the conversations around her. The resolution was her realisation that it was not her language ability but her lack of cultural awareness that affected the way she performed her role identity of NES in this situation.

### 6.2.3 Event B: Questions of identity in Venezuela

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I worked in Venezuela for a short time. When I was in Venezuela I worked for the British Council so you’re in this sort of very strong institution with all the branding and I think that probably helped - I never got any questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>I always got questions about my background but like “Oh yeah y’know, where you from?” but they never questioned the validity of my qualifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>Maybe because I was working in the British Council and they sort of knew I belonged to that but I always got questioned - “Where are you from?” - that sort of question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>Well, I would normally say, well just recently, I say I’m Indian origin, because now I’m British as well and have dual nationality but until about 4 years ago I didn’t have British nationality...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>...so I’d just say I’m Indian and I’d let them work for it a bit y’know to find out like “Oh you don’t speak English like an Indian!” “No, no I don’t, no.” “Hmmm?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This event took place when Suri worked for the British Council in Venezuela. Suri observed that there was a lack of direct questions regarding her NEST background and qualifications and surmised that it may have been because she was a representative of the British Council. In contrast to the lack of direct questions, the CCA in this event was that she was still asked “Where are you from?” types of questions. However, she was aware of the subtext and played along because she felt that the questions were asked out of genuine curiosity about her background.

Her perspective briefly changed to NRI which she felt she belonged because she worked for the British Council. She did not state who or what she was belonging to, but it may be inferred as belonging to the staff of the British Council, who were considered legitimate NESTs. However, she reflected that despite being associated with a well-known English language provider she was still asked where she was from.

The ERI identity she performed was a (NEST) teacher from the British Council. Her previous reference to the branding of the British Council framed her assumptions that the local students and staff, in part, accepted her performance because she was a representative of a widely known English language provider. However, they still asked “Where are you from?” and while she gave her students the benefit of the doubt for being curious she provided a vague answer (e.g. “I’m Indian”) to address those that indirectly questioned her NES identity.

In the resolution, her answer resulted in perhaps more questions that Suri replied with vague answers as a way of challenging their indirect questions about her NES identity (e.g. “Oh you don’t speak English like an Indian!”, “No, no I don’t”). This exchange revealed the NEST role norms that regulated the students’ racial identity expectations of English language teachers. In Suri’s example, an Indian woman cannot really be a NEST, yet, Suri’s English language ability met the NEST role norm. This apparent contradiction created uncertainty within her students and Suri used this uncertainty to challenge the
6.2.4 Event C: Being rejected for a South Korean EFL post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Actually that reminds me, when I was in the British Council you have an interview in London, you’re recruited in London but then you don’t have to follow the interview process again, you can just apply for different councils all over the world and I remember I was moving on from I think it was Equatorial Guinea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>I did apply for the British Council in Korea and the director phoned me back and said, “This is just unofficial but we’d love to have you but I think you’d have big problems here not being white.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>So that was...that would never happen in the UK today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>And part of me was saying “Why don’t you employ me and then just try to overturn stereotypes rather than” - but then I wasn’t British at the time, I just had an Indian passport so that could have been some of the issues there.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3: Event C in Suri’s story

Event C was an example of Suri facing a direct challenge to her NEST role identity because her Indian racial identity did not fit with the white role norm expected of NESTs. As such, her VEM-NEST identity performance was met with resistance. This event opened with Suri explaining how the British Council had offices all over the world that she could potentially apply to. The CCA in this event was that the British Council chose not to hire Suri for a post in South Korea because they feared she would not be accepted there because she was not white.

Racial identity norms were evident in the regulation of who is allowed to perform as a NEST. During this event, the recruiters were aware of the racial role norms, yet, were not prepared to challenge them by hiring Suri. Suri was aware of this and would have liked the opportunity to challenge the role norms, but backed down because she realised that...
she did not meet enough NEST role norms, such as possessing a British passport. Suri’s performance during Event C demonstrated that VEM-NESTs must meet a certain amount of role norms in a given situation, in order to create a space for identity negotiation and acceptance to take place.

Her NRI was a brief comparison between the hiring practices of the UK and South Korea. In a UK context, Suri felt she would not have been turned down for a job on the basis of her racial identity, whereas in South Korea, she believed she would have been. This short comment highlighted the issue of how racial identity norms may be perceived differently in specific contexts.

### 6.2.5 Event D: The Spanish hotel manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I suppose a particular event, because it was so painful, occurred quite late in my career, in 2001, in Spain. It was over a 6-week period I was giving intensive English classes and this was like 2 weeks in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>But arriving for my class (teaching catering staff at a posh hotel in Seville) a manager accosted me: Manager: De donde eres? S: Soy de la India. M: Hablas ingles? S: Si...hablo ingles. M: Pero hablas bien? Hablas como un nativo? S: Si, si, claro que si.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>So it was very hurtful, I suppose. It wasn’t in front of my class, which was strange! I don’t understand why it happened. It was humiliating on many accounts...to be confronted like that in the hotel vestibule, to be accosted in Spanish (which I’m not confident in), and to have my professional credentials queried (I had been sent to teach on-site by the most respected language school in Seville – IH).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(NRI Reflection: lines 101 - 129)*

| Orientation | And I did go back to the school later ... |
Table 6.4: Event D in Suri’s story

Event D was considered important to Suri because she regarded it as a particularly painful event (line 082) and it was therefore quite memorable. This was the only event Suri re-enacted, taking her audience back to the situation by presenting the conversation between a hotel manager and herself. This event was set in two different timeframes, the first situated in the confrontation between herself and the hotel manager and the second when she reported the incident to the school who hired her. In-between the two timeframes was Suri’s extensive reflection on being confronted.

The first orientation element situated this event in Spain, two weeks into a six week short intensive English language course. These details set the scene for the CCA in that the hotel manager was not aware of Suri’s ethnicity prior to the course and that they became aware of Suri after the course had started, implying that the hotel management was not part of the hiring process. These details framed Suri’s lengthy reflection on being confronted.

The CCA was the interaction between Suri and the hotel manager in which Suri’s performance as a VEM-NEST was challenged because the hotel manager did not believe she was a real NEST. As evident in the previous Events B and C, the white racial role norm for NEST role identities influenced the way in which Suri, an individual of Indian decent, was considered acceptable by other people in her situation. What was different during this event was the challenge to Suri’s VEM-NEST role identity was direct whereas the previous lines of questioning in Events B and C were less overt. The direct nature of the questioning struck a cord with Suri and she went on to reflect extensively on her experiences in lines 101 - 129.
There was no good reason for me to be questioned like that other than the hotel management seeing me come in and thinking “Who is IH sending us? We’re paying good money! We want a proper teacher!”, and the real injury was that the students loved me! When they had started the course they had given good feedback, they were learning, they were coming to classes, which apparently was a big problem because they work long hours. So making them come to an extra class where previously the attendance had been really poor. I was involved in a, in some sort of power struggle.

I think it was because, y’know, they were sort of - for want of a better word - working class Spanish people who have a strong respect for the teaching profession they had that sort of Figure of me. Whereas, y’know maybe the higher level of management didn’t have that sort of perception of teachers. What happened instead was it was just all on the top level, y’know, and they didn’t even...for some reason they didn’t even want to go to the school and ask the school, which was very strange but y’know it was a very odd incident. They never came to observe. There was no involvement, it was simply - I think they were just questioning where the money was going. So I think there was some sort of power struggle, and I was tangled up in that. But it was clear that I needed to be white in order to speak English in their eyes (lines 101 - 129).

Her retrospective view discussed the differences between how she was perceived by her students and the hotel management. From her students, while they did ask “Where are you from?”, this did not affect their overall view of Suri, whereas she observed that the negative view she received from the hotel management was not in terms of her actual performance as an English language teacher, but whether she fit their perceptions of NESTs. Suri’s words “I think they were just questioning where the money was going”, draws attention to the effect NEST role norms have on the way NEST role identities are valued by different audiences.

Event D finished with Suri reporting her encounter to her managers who “were just horrified”. Their reaction implied that they did not agree with the hotel managers’ perception of Suri. She chose to talk about the challenges she faced as a VEM-NEST in order to raise awareness, and so that others, like her, may be warned about the possibility of encountering similar situations.

**6.2.6 Further reflections of VEM-NEST experiences**

Suri continued her reflections of her experiences during Event D and shared some of her own analysis of what transpired. The first observation she made was on the subject of polylingualism:

Well I think, it taught me that I expected Spain to be a sort of plural sort of society because of the y’know the Spanish colonies in Latin America and Spanish colony in Africa where I worked, in
Guyana where Spanish is spoken and people speak it well. It was like I mentioned, they (Africans) are very good linguists themselves they speak the language of their mother tongue, they speak the language of the coloniser and other languages so polylingualism wasn’t new to a lot of Africans but they never felt the need to question me whereas in Spain, and funnily enough because Spanish also has a presence all over the world (lines 165 - 173).

Suri expected Spain would be similar to Guyana in that the people would be used to Spanish speakers of different racial identities. She then moves on to discuss the relationship between the perceptions of “proper” Spanish speakers and “proper” English speakers:

But what I hadn’t realised is that idea that they speak Spanish there but it’s not proper Spanish it’s not Castilian Spanish – it’s a different accent, they use different grammar in some sentences so it’s actually degrees of Spanish in these people’s eyes, of quality of Spanish spoken. And for them, the best quality Spanish came out of white people from Spain, not a mixed raced person from Columbia or even maybe a white person from Argentina, not even. But so in some ways they transferred that to English language sort of setting, ok, so like these people, these ethnic minorities in the UK, they might be speaking English but they’re not speaking it well, maybe they’ve got their own slang, maybe they’ve got their own grammar, so I want to learn proper English from a white person. It’s possibly what they were thinking (lines 178 - 188).

It is an interesting connection between perceptions of “best quality Spanish” spoken by white people being carried over to perceptions of “best quality English” being spoken by white people.

6.3 Peter’s Profile

Peter considers the term “British - Sri Lankan” as a statement that adequately describes his background but nowadays feels more British because he has lived in the UK for several decades. He considers himself a NES because English was his first language. Growing up in post-colonial Sri Lanka, he aspirations of becoming a full NES were closely related to becoming “Western”. However, after immigrating to the UK Peter learned that wanting to be “Western” was not enough to be a NES and he subsequently adapted his NES performance by changing his accent to sound less Sri Lankan and more British so that he may be recognised as a UK NES. These early experiences affected his later VEM-NEST performances in that he was already made aware that his ethnic identity could have affected the way he was perceived as a NNS by his students. However, the potential to be mistaken for a NNS because of his race does not bother him.
The following sections present seven key events that occurred in Peter’s restoried narrative and an important meta-commentary of his reflections upon his experiences.

### 6.3.1 Background: Becoming “Western” and speaking English

Peter was born and raised in Sri Lanka where he considered English as his first language. He learned to speak several languages but chose to regard English as his first language because it represented “The West”. At the time “The West” was specifically associated with the UK and the idea of a better life in “The West” appealed to Peter’s childhood imagination.

Even in Sri Lanka for example, Britain was the last colonial power there. Everything actually abroad, especially western, and in those days when I was growing up, in the 70s, Britain was - I think usurped by America now - but Britain was the western country that people would go to. Even people whose first language is Sinhalese would go and would come and study here if they were rich enough and stuff like that. So those values were inherent in all people in Sri Lanka because of reasons of dominance and power really, so that people aspired to be western. So if my cousins went abroad and came back it was like this amazing thing that they were going to this wonderful place, to “The Valhalla”. Y’know so that was it (lines 032 - 042).

Peter’s view of “The West” has its roots in the post-colonial context of Sri Lanka in which the British establishment of a two-tiered education system created a stratified society (Canagarajah 2005). Access to English education was limited to those who could afford the fees, resulting in the economic affluence that came with an English education that was largely distributed among the prevailing caste hierarchy (ibid, p.422). Peter’s family could afford to pay for an English education and marked him out to be from a higher caste.

### 6.3.2 Event A: The Marlborough bag

“The West” held the promise of wealth and success to the level that ownership of any western goods was regarded as something special. The first event in Peter’s story recounts a seemingly simple situation of taking his swimming costume in a “Marlborough bag”.

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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Also if you, well you might not know but there was politically and historically there was an import ban in Sri Lanka because it was undergoing a vaguely left wing agenda, so there was an import ban and the government at the time was promoting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
basically national products. So that made the allure more mysterious, the Cadburys, the Coke - ah, Coke is American. I mean we’d have things, like we’d go swimming and my Irish cousins would come back and I’d have a plastic bag with some shop here that said Harrods or something like that or any stupid thing, not necessarily English - it could be like a Marlborough bag.

I mean we would love to go and carry our swimming clothes in a Marlborough bag so we could show the other kids that we knew somebody that had been abroad and like wow, you’re something - you’re a bit special.

Table 6.5: Event A in Peter’s story

The act of possessing a bag from a shop outside of Sri Lanka was regarded as a marker of class. Peter deliberately carried his Marlborough bag in public in order to set himself apart from others to show that he was more “Western” because he had access to “Western” objects.

Closely related to Peter’s interest in becoming “Western” was learning and speaking English. He retrospectively considered the post-colonial context as an influential factor that drove people to view “the West” as better than their own country. English was considered the language of “the West” and, by becoming proficient it in, one could potentially become more Westernised and therefore better than others.

We spoke English, and so we went to English films and so in that sense it was a natural progression that we would all embrace western things even more than other people because it was like what we aspired to be (lines 064 - 067).

Peter was a member of a high Sri Lankan caste which already positioned him above most members of society. His efforts to become “western” set him and his family even further apart, not only from a large portion of society but potentially from members of his own caste.

6.3.3 Event B: Grandfather’s house

During Event B, Peter’s focus on English and “The West” was not always welcomed. His grandfather felt that Sri Lanka was becoming too British despite being an ex-colony.
This was juxtaposed with my father’s side of the family who lived in the interior hill area and where my patriarchal grandfather, who was at times a somewhat fearsome, to a young boy, and proud Sinhalese man, insisted on giving me Sinhalese story books to read. Anyway basically he was a very strong nationalist - a Sinhalese nationalist - but he was very, very open-minded. So in his house there was a firmament of ideas and creativity. I just remember that house when I was a kid and I was scared to go there actually when he was there. He was very austere. I remember I just felt it was a very constricting atmosphere.

I think he felt that we were getting a lot of western influence down there in Colombo and, “C’mon, you’re also Sinhalese you should be proud to be Sinhalese!”

So that was the intention I think, actually, because it was coming from his background and his background was Sri Lanka for the Sinhalese. It wasn’t that he was a racist or anything, just I would say that he was a nationalist and was totally left wing, and outwardly he was promoting the common man even though he was rich himself.

This particular event saw this grandfather challenging Peter as a child to be more Sinhalese than “western”. In retrospect Peter is able to understand why his grandfather tried to encourage him to speak Sinhalese but, as a child, he felt uncomfortable with the pressure because it was at odds with Peter’s goal to be more “Western”.

The CCA here is summarised in his grandfather’s comment “C’mon, you’re also Sinhalese! You should be proud to be Sinhalese!” reflecting the binary of Sri Lanka vs. the West view that compared one to the other. His grandfather’s concern that Peter was becoming too “Western” reflected his own view that Sri Lanka, as a country, was losing its localised identity to “the West”. The import ban on foreign products, previously mentioned in the Marlborough bag description, mirrored the view of Sri Lanka becoming too “Western”.

**6.3.4 Adapting to life in Britain**

Peter and his family eventually emigrated to the UK where he learned that he needed to adapt to the way he understood what it meant to be “Western”. He discovered that
being proficient in English did not necessarily make him a NES. Growing up he learned that accent was a major part of performing his NES identity convincingly. Bearing this in mind, Peter reflected on the era he grew up in and observed that racism was more acceptable then.

Y’know if you think to those days, if you imagine in those days what was the norm in popular discourse, in popular entertainment, you had the Black and White Minstrel Show and stuff like that. People were pretty openly racist. You used to get people like Love Thy Neighbour, which were comedies that were horrendous stereotypes of black people. I mean really, y’know. That’s what we grew up with (lines 122 - 127).

Growing up with this sort of racism made him realise his position in British society in that he was not in the same social position in the UK as he was in Sri Lanka.

I used to support Man U and that was some truly, truly awful experiences there. Truly that racism was horrendous, the chanting and all that. You see it fairly quickly and you suddenly realise that. There was a bit of fear. You’re on the back foot. In Sri Lanka we were top dogs. We weren’t that rich but we weren’t that poor either. Y’know we grew up thinking that we were the best (lines 128 - 132).

Peter and his family enjoyed a higher status in Sri Lanka because of their caste and their associations with becoming “Western”. Upon arrival in the UK, considered to be the ultimate act to becoming “Western”, they were relegated to a lower social status because they were new immigrants to England during a period when racism was more overt than today.

6.3.5 Event E: UK grammar school at thirteen years old

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I don’t know what your experiences were but that was like Survivor almost. At that age, - twelve, thirteen - you can’t go and talk English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>I’d say my English was very good but my accent had this Singhalese intonation you couldn’t talk like that for very long or you’d be laughed at.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I think at first, I managed to get into _____ Grammar School and I was something exotic there. But again, it was nothing and I know I felt that this could be a terrible time of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>I mean people used to say terrible things and you couldn’t really fight back, y’know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
you just couldn’t.

So you did things that made you more accepted, like change your accent. Definitely. I don’t think that was conscious or if it just sort of came.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you just couldn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So you did things that made you more accepted, like change your accent. Definitely. I don’t think that was conscious or if it just sort of came.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.7: Event E in Peter’s story

Speaking English with a Sri Lankan accent marked him out as a foreigner and, considering how much he aspired to be Western, chose to "lose" his accent when he emigrated to the UK. The CCA in this event was speaking English with a Singhalese intonation and being laughed at. For Peter becoming more Western was being able to assimilate into UK society. Speaking English with a Sri Lankan accent made him a target for bullies because his English did not meet the role norms associated with how a NES should be performed in the UK. So, understandably, he changed his accent to become more accepted by his peers.

6.3.6 Event F: Meeting the Sri Lankan Cricket Player

For the most part Peter chose to "lose" his Sri Lankan accent as a way of assimilating into UK society and achieving his goal of becoming “Western” in the process. However, as he grew older and gained more confidence he chose to add his Sri Lankan accent back to the way he spoke English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation/NRI</td>
<td>I got to say, it’s to do with confidence of yourself. I actually changed because while I was going through school and then I used to play a lot of cricket. I was good at cricket. Grammar School had quite high academic standards and I wasn’t the top dog at all I was kind of like at the bottom of the class. So that used to set me back a bit in terms of confidence but cricket, wow, that was it. And also the stereotypes, “Oh you’re dark so you must be good. You’re from the sub-continent...” and those kind of stereotypes and I actually, I was quite good. So then that was great – summertime! I remember, as I was getting older like sometime when I was 17 or 18, I was doing A levels and I was playing really good cricket then and was playing for like Toshar 19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Then there were some professionals who came and played in one of the clubs that I was at and he was from Sri Lanka and he spoke English with a Singhalese accent...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
... and I thought, “Actually, this is...I wanna speak like you!” I actually kind of reverted back to a little bit to my old, my home accent, the one I didn’t use outside my home, the one I usually used when I spoke to my parents at home.

I used it, and I became so much more confident and even at school, I was confident enough to be more myself.

So that mask, you didn’t need that mask.

Table 6.8: Event F in Peter’s story

During Event F when Peter met a professional cricket player from Sri Lanka who changed his perception of how he could perform as a Sri Lankan NES. The orientation of Event F sets up the situation of his experiences attending grammar school. He began with the statement “I got to say, it’s to do with confidence of yourself” that explained the basis of changing his performance to suit his identities. As a young man he was not academically strong (“I was kind of like bottom of the class”) which affected him negatively to some degree, but as a cricket player he was able to build back his confidence. As a cricket player he found a suitable role identity that was not only accepted by others but one that he felt comfortable performing.

In the context of a cricket match which was a setting that Peter seemed most comfortable in, the CCA in this event saw Peter observing a professional Sri Lankan cricket player speak English differently to Peter’s own performance (“...he was from Sri Lanka and he spoke English with a Singhalese accent and I thought, ‘Actually, this is...I want to speak like you!’”). It is not clear if the Sri Lankan cricket player was a NES or a NNES but regardless of this distinction this cricket player chose not to change his Sri Lankan accent. Peter, as a young man, saw the cricket player’s accent as an alternative option to perform as a NES. From this observation Peter chose to “revert back” to speaking English with a Sri Lankan accent because he felt it could be an acceptable NES performance.

By choosing to “revert back” Peter challenged the NES role norms of having to speak English in a particular way. His last sentence,”...I was confident enough to be more
myself...” suggested that losing his Sri Lankan accent was not natural but a way of keeping his identity hidden because his NES performance was restricted. Seeing other Sri Lankans speaking English with an accent showed Peter that he did not have to change his accent to be a NES. He was already one and could perform his NES role identity on his terms.

6.3.7 Event D: Using different English accents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation/NRI</td>
<td>Over the years I have visited Sri Lanka on numerous occasions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Each time both consciously and sub – consciously, during my time there, I have spoken English with a slight Sri Lankan accent with different stress patterns and intonation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>It was my way of becoming ‘another’ person. I actually think you change to become a different person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>I just become more Sri Lankan and because I still have a lot of cultural and other kind of reference points with friends, so when we talk about some incident in the past that’s funny we speak English with a Sri Lankan accent. That’s all part of it, that’s all part of me becoming a slightly different person. Definitely.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6.9: Event D in Peter’s story*

Event D appears before Event E and F but it is presented here to illustrate the result of Peter’s earlier experiences. In this event Peter’s performance was a way of becoming more Sri Lankan in order to connect with his friends. Moreover, Peter recognised this NES performance as different to the one he performs in the UK, yet, these different NES performances are all part of who he is.

6.3.8 Experiences as a VEM-NEST

Peter has had many years of experience as an ELT and has developed an awareness of what it means to be a VEM-NEST. His experiences emigrating to the UK has made him aware of NES role norms so that when performing in a NEST role identity Peter choose to change his accent to be more in line with what is expected of a British NEST.
His ethnicity was not an issue during his first job teaching in China but instead, Peter was made to feel welcome because the previous teacher, who was also British Asian, was very popular. This paved the way for his VEM-NEST performance to be accepted:

My first English teaching job was also in China. I didn’t, however, have the “hindrance” of looking Chinese. I was part of a teaching group, though mainly white, which did have a very popular British Asian English teacher. The students were already used to being taught by a non–white teacher. At the time I think both of us were largely perceived in the classroom and outside, as somewhat exotic “laowais” (foreigners) (lines 180 - 185).

In this instance he met enough of the NEST role norms (e.g. British accent, British passport) to allow him to perform as a VEM-NEST in this context. Moreover his ethnicity set him apart as a different kind of foreigner but a foreigner nonetheless.

6.3.9 Event G: The Chinese student’s question

Peter described two specific situations when his ethnicity was an issue. Event G was the first event when Peter’s credentials were questioned because he did not fit the white racial norm. Note that it was not his actions (e.g. His teaching manner, his accent etc.) that prompted this line of questioning but his VEM-NEST identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation/NRI</td>
<td>Actually “proving my credentials” as an English language teacher as you put it, came a little later when I was teaching business English in Shropshire. The learners were mostly European businessmen and women with occasionally people from China and the Middle East arriving to be tutored one – to – one or in small groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>Interestingly, it was a Chinese businessman who asked about my qualifications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>This came at the end of a session, which included another businessman from France. As far as I can recall, the lesson seemed to be fine and there was a good S – S and S – T rapport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>At the end of the session however, the Chinese man almost seamlessly and without me realising the inference or subtext at first, asked what formal qualifications I had for doing this job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>I answered his questions confidently and dispassionately. I sensed however that the French man was a little embarrassed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ERI

Having spoken about this later in the privacy of the staffroom, it was apparent that none of the other tutors, who were all white, had been asked similar questions. I spoke about this later to the husband and wife team who ran the school, and who I had - and still have - a very good rapport with, and we laughed and joked about the incident.

Table 6.10: Event G in Peter’s story

During Event G, Peter was singled out because he did not fit the student’s perception of a NEST and therefore felt the need to ask for Peter’s qualifications. The need to ask for Peter’s qualifications implied that the student doubted Peter’s performance as a NEST because he is not white. Considering that no other member of staff was asked the question reiterates the fact that his Chinese student did not considered Peter as equal to his white counterparts.

Even after realising the underlying implications Peter’s reaction was very calm and his reflection on the incident was quite positive:

I spoke about this later to the husband and wife team who ran the school, and who I had - and still have - a very good rapport with, and we laughed and joked about the incident. On reflection at the time, and on reflection now, at no point did I feel demeaned or slighted in any way by this incident. As mentioned, I had a very good relationship both professional and personal with the proprietors and other staff members. I also had a very good rapport with all the learners, including the Chinese businessman, and I felt confident in myself as a tutor and person. I am not sure though how I would have felt had my credentials been questioned earlier, say in my first job in China. I suspect I would have felt frustrated and anxious as you did (lines 201 - 212).

He attributes his positive reactions to several contextual factors, the first having a good working relationship with his employers and with the student who posed the question. Having a good rapport provided a positive situation for him to share his grievances. On a more personal level, Peter feels very self-confident, a status he attributes as a combination of his experiences growing up in Sri Lanka and later in the UK all of which enabled him to positively perform his VEM-NEST identity.

6.3.10 Event H: Peter’s permanent position question

The second situation took place during Event H, in which Peter's ethnicity is brought to the forefront of negotiating for better teaching terms. Peter remained aware of his VEM-
NEST status because he was again reminded that his ethnicity was a potential issue for students.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I initially began my current job with a somewhat loose arrangement whereby I was paid hourly for the work I did. At the time this was a mutually suitable arrangement for myself, and my employer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>On first broaching the subject of a more permanent arrangement whereby I would have a contract with fixed hours, holiday pay and other basic employment rights, I was told by my employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>- an Asian man with whom I go back many years and who I would actually regard as a friend -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>that he was unsure about taking someone on permanently who would be perceived by certain groups of people, Arabs, Chinese, Iranian according to him, as not truly English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>He even joked - and I joined in his laughter - that these people would rather be taught “by that drunkard down the road as long as he was white!” I paraphrase here, but not too much!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>And because of my relationship with this man and my knowledge of him as a person, odious though the comments and situation may have seemed and still seem, to others, I knew it was nothing personal. Simply a commercial decision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.11: Event H in Peter’s story

This event took place in a UK English language provider. At the time he was an hourly paid temporary teacher. The act of inquiring about making his position more permanent was rejected because Peter was potentially viewed as a liability for the school. This orientation then framed the CCA which, in this event, was the employer’s assumption that the students would reject Peter as a NEST because he is not white, despite his professional qualifications and years of teaching experience. This rejection brought up the white racial norm expected of the NEST role identity that continues to influence how VEM-NESTs are perceived, except in this situation it was Peter’s employer rather than the students that made Peter’s ethnicity a visible issue.
Like previous situations, in the resolution Peter received the news well and while he does not accept his employer’s reasoning, Peter chose not to take the rejection personally and remained friends with his employer. He then moved on from the event and reflected more broadly on this experience.

On reflection, I do not excuse this man’s behaviour. A commercial decision does not erase the racism both implicit and explicit bound within it. A restaurant owner in 1960s Alabama could turn to civil rights activists and say that serving black customers would put his white clientele off; a purely commercial decision therefore. However, through a combination of my affection for this person, and my own sense of self, a sense brought about by a deep well-spring of confidence and self-worth imbued into me primarily from my parents, from the earliest of times, meant that I could not really get angry with this man. I suppose, more prosaically, this could simply have been because I was not materially affected by this decision at the time. And so I carried on with our mutually beneficial agreement until a little later when he himself came to me with a permanent offer (lines 252 - 263).

It is not clear why Peter’s employer changed his mind, only that he eventually did. This is a small demonstration of how NEST role norms can change. Through hiring Peter on a more permanent basis the employer allowed Peter the opportunity to perform his VEM-NEST identity.

6.4 Li’s Profile

Li identified herself as Chinese - Canadian. She was born in Hong Kong and had spent a considerable amount of her childhood moving between Hong Kong and Canada. It could be argued that Li is bilingual in English and Cantonese, however, she considers herself a native speaker of English not because she was born in Canada, but because it was a language she learned from a young age. Her story describes some of her initial teaching experiences in Hong Kong and South Korea as an unqualified English language teacher. After these experiences Li returned to Canada and took a CELTA course before returning to mainland China to teach English. At the time of the interview, Li considered doing further training to teach English as a long-term career option.

The following sections present five key events that occurred in Li’s restored narrative and an important meta-commentary of her reflections upon her experiences.
6.4.1 Background introduction: Growing up in two different countries

Li began her story with an overview of when and why she moved several times between Hong Kong, her place of birth, and Canada, her current home. Between the ages of three and twelve, she spent a considerable amount of her schooling in two different educational systems: the English School Foundation system in Hong Kong and the Canadian public school system. In both systems English was the medium of instruction and in both contexts Li’s classmates were Chinese children who were nationals of countries other than China.

Despite living in two different countries she grew up surrounded by other children who had a similar background as her,

I thought I was Chinese like everybody else. Basically all my friends are exactly like me, like they all speak English but they’re all like ethnically Chinese so, I didn’t think I was any different. When I moved back to Canada it was like the same thing because I lived in Scarborough, and if you don’t know, I think 70% of the population of Scarborough are Chinese as well (lines 024 - 030).

Her lack of exposure to other cultures may have affected her perception of her NES role identity. Growing up Li was not aware that different language identities existed, let alone a NES role identity, because she did not realise that the ability to speak different languages was a unique skill.

When I was young, it never occurred to me that speaking two languages was something that was privileged. I think when I was in grade nine or ten because that was when I started learning Mandarin all by myself, and I was like "Oh they’re different languages" (lines 038-041).

When she became older she was able to distinguish between languages but for the most part, she did not have a concept of being a native speaker of either English or Cantonese.

6.4.2 Event A: Li and her father's English ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>My mother and father both learned English at a much later age and have great difficulty in pronunciation and grammar so when I was growing up, it had always been speaking Cantonese at home and English at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I was in kindergarten when I first moved from Canada I had my dad taught me homework and he was reading all the English books...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CCA

...and then I realised he wasn’t reading them correctly. His pronunciation was all wrong and that’s when I realised my dad doesn’t speak English...

Resolution

...but it wasn’t like a language to me back then, it was just a way of communicating so that’s when I figured out that my dad couldn’t communicate with me in English.

Table 6.12: Event A in Li’s story

At a very early age Li realised her English language ability was much higher than that of her parents and that she would only be able to speak to them in Cantonese. Not being able to use English to communicate to her parents could have been a reason why Li did not realise she was a NES until much later in her life. However, by her own admission, her parents, at present, do not regard her as a NES partly due to the fact that she does not use English to communicate to them. She does, however, choose to speak English to her brother.

My parents don’t see me as a native speaker of English because I never speak to them in English. I speak to my brother in English because my brother’s not actually very good in Chinese or English. I can’t say he’s a native speaker of English because he’s also not a native speaker of Chinese (lines 065 - 069).

Li’s choice to speak different languages with different members of her family was a distinction that Li is comfortable with and later admitted that this distinction did not affect the way she presently sees herself as a NES, whereas her journey to realising that she is a NES was less straightforward.

6.4.3 Event B: Associating NEST and “foreigner” in Hong Kong

Li described her volunteer experience as a NEST during Event B where she focused on the assumption that NEST meaning “foreigner”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I volunteered one summer at an English summer camp, leading and counselling young children in English. These children were used to Asian faces that didn’t speak any Chinese (or so they thought) and they were forced to speak English for the duration of the week. The children treated me as if I was a real foreigner and spoke only English to me (which was the purpose of the camp).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I don’t think the lady who owns that place actively hires Asian faces but then we’re not, like, we’re in excess supply of Asian faces and native English speakers in Hong Kong so she doesn’t really need to hire anybody from overseas.

It was really funny, they expect you not to speak any Cantonese so they talk behind your back, actually it’s right in front of you and they speak Cantonese right in front of you and they don’t think you speak any Cantonese at all so they just like talk about you, right in front of you, in Cantonese! So you know that they think you’re a foreigner.

Unfortunately, at one point a student caught me speaking Chinese to the camp staff (who didn’t know any English) and figured out that I didn’t ONLY speak English, and things changed from there.

It changed a little bit, so they stopped talking about me in Cantonese and whatever, of course, but they, well they were a little friendlier because now they know I speak Cantonese.

This event took place in Hong Kong while she was a volunteer staff member at an English summer camp. The children in this context defined "foreigner" mostly along Chinese language ability. Thus for Li, being treated like "a real foreigner" was because she hid the fact she could speak Cantonese. Li observed that the management hired “Asian faces” but viewed this act more out of convenience due to the number of foreign visitors to Hong Kong.

Li’s charade eventually unravelled when her students discovered that she does speak Cantonese which changed the dynamics of the relationship. Li observed that her students became friendlier towards her because she seems more like them. Li’s move from “real foreigner” to “someone like them” was a theme that she returned to in Event F.

6.4.4 Event C: Questions in South Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>I always knew that being an Asian meant it would be immensely difficult for me to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>teach English as a second language because of the general impression and bias Asians carry around. Most parents do not believe that you are a native English speaker with an Asian face, this simply can not be true in their world (my own parents have the same impression).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>My very first day at my first English teaching job in South Korea, I realised how true this notion was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>I stepped into the office, and my Korean manager spoke to me in Korean and asked me if I was a parent of one of the children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Our Korean support team had to explain to her that I was an English teacher and that I was Canadian, not Korean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>It’s a little bit hard for them to accept that you’re not white but you’re from Canada. So it just doesn’t register, with them, it takes like 5 or 6 times before they start saying “Oh, she’s Canadian” and then next time they come to class they forget again, but if you tell them you’re Chinese then immediately they’re like, “Oh she’s Chinese” and then they all get it. Well they’d ask questions like “Do you know how to write this in Chinese?” or “Do you know any Korean?” or “Why is your English so good?”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>Many times in South Korea I find that admitting I was Chinese was much easier than convincing children that I was Canadian. Questions stopped and an expression of understanding would dawn on their faces.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was something very useful to me.

Table 6.14: Event C in Li’s story

This was a key event in Li’s story because it was when she realised she was a NES. The concept of NEST as a “real foreigner” was a topic that Li continued to explore in her story. During her experiences in South Korea (Event C) the NEST role identity is associated with “foreigners”, or, non-Koreans. From her own experiences with her family, Li was aware that she would not be considered as a NES because her ethnic identity does not mark her out as a foreigner in Asia and consequently she was aware it would be difficult to be considered for ELT jobs in Asia. Bearing this in mind Li adapted her performed VEM-NEST role identity to emphasise her foreign status. Li sought to clarify her NES identity in order to distinguish herself from her students and, more broadly, local NNES teachers.

However it was not her Canadian identity that she emphasised during this event but her Chinese identity. Rather than convince her students she was a Canadian “type” of foreigner she found it was easier to say she was a Chinese “type” of foreigner. The fact that Li’s Chinese identity was more acceptable than her Canadian identity is based on the underlying perception that real Canadians are considered white. This racial role norm was something Li was aware of and therefore brought attention to her Chinese identity so that she may be considered “foreign enough” to perform as a VEM-NEST. Li’s goal was not to look foreign, per se, but rather to be considered “not-Korean” as a way of creating opportunities for her to perform as a VEM-NEST. While Li was aware that she did not look “foreign enough” she was aware that it had some advantages.

6.4.5 Event D: The really foreign Korean woman

During Event D, Li reiterates her view of “being foreign enough” through her observations of a New Zealand born Korean woman she met who Li assumed did not encounter the same challenges to her identity.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>The city that I worked at in the beginning was _____ and it’s the 3rd largest city and basically the whole, or the foreign staff were actual foreigners and I was the only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chinese person there but when I went to _____ which is really close to Seoul, I think there was one girl that was actually, she’s South Korean, but she was adopted and she grew up in New Zealand so she didn’t speak any Korean and actually she had a bit of a foreign look to her so, like the way she dressed and the way she put on her make up she actually looked kind of like a foreigner.

So she wasn’t like me, like I look 100% Chinese.

I don’t think she encountered the same problems, she did mention that the kids would ask her if she knew any Korean but that was all.

### Table 6.15: Event D in Li’s story

In South Korea, Li did not consider herself as part of the foreign staff because she is Chinese. Her description of the staff as being “actual foreigners” alluded to their non-Asian appearance. This detail situated the CCA in this event which Li’s compared her appearance to the New Zealand Korean woman. In Li’s opinion, this woman, by virtue of the way she carried herself, could be regarded as foreign because she looked different to local Koreans, despite being Korean herself. Li assumed that this woman was more likely to be accepted as an VEM-NEST because she looked “foreign enough”. Li, in comparison, felt she could only be perceived as Chinese which made it harder for her to manage her identity as a VEM-NEST.

### 6.4.6 Event E: The foreign teacher poster

Li was only able to perform her VEM-NEST role identity when she was given the opportunity. The difficulty lies with being accepted as a NEST in the first place in order to gain employment so that the VEM-NEST role identity may be performed. This event presented the difficulty Li faced when applying for ELT posts in China because she is Chinese.
I asked him, and it was because they actually had all their foreign teachers pictures taken, and they’re all portrait size and they put it at the door so the parent of little kids can see that it’s actually foreigners teaching their kids English.

There’s not one Asian face up there.

For me, to be truly foreign, you’d have to have a different face. Different hair colour, different coloured eyes, you have to have features that’s not Asian. Just not even Korean or Japanese, just not Asian at all.

Table 6.16: Event E in Li’s story

Event E is an example of how the white racial role norm regulates the perceptions of what NESTs are “foreign enough”. Their rejection of Li’s application reinforced her view that in order to be considered “truly foreign” in China, one cannot be Asian. Her view was mirrored in this company’s practice of only using white teachers to advertise their school. Implied in this practice was the view that white people are real NESTs and Asians are not.

Li realised that she will never be considered a “real foreigner” and comes to accept this fact. “Y’know so if they don’t hire me, they don’t hire me” (line 349) is a statement of acceptance, and perhaps resignation, of the reality Li has to deal with. Her experiences have shown her that there are companies that are willing to provide the opportunities for her to perform her VEM-NEST role identities, and she bears this in mind as she continues to look for work.

6.4.7 Event F: Being a Chinese VEM-NEST

In a seemingly contradictory view, Li felt that not being considered foreign was something of an advantage.

Having an Asian face and teaching in China was not a barrier for me. In fact, it was the greatest advantage I could ever have asked for. Other than the initial, expected, shock and awe reactions from the students, I realised that they really appreciated having an Asian native English speaker as their teacher (lines 277-281).

After this reflection she goes on to describe a positive experience of being able to specifically perform as a Chinese VEM-NEST.
### Table 6.17: Event F in Li’s story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>In the beginning, when students found out I was a new teacher and that I was a foreign teacher they were surprised, especially with small classes where it’s really separated into different levels because the lower levels were always taught by local teachers and the higher levels were taught by foreign teachers…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>…so whenever I would go into a class with the higher level students they’d go “Oh I thought this was a foreign teacher class” and I’d be like “No, I am a foreign teacher” and because these students were all adults it took more explaining but it hits them that I’m Chinese-Canadian and I do speak all three languages and they do know that…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>… but they’re completely fine with it because they’re there to learn English and they’re actually people paying to learn English so they don’t speak Chinese to you. They find it actually to be a little bit of an advantage as well because sometimes they have questions that they just don’t know how to ask in English so they give you the word in Chinese and I can translate that for you and I can explain that in English for you as well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This event was situated in China, at the start of a new class when Li met new students for the first time. There was certainly some explaining on her part, as described in the CCA, but the students accepted her and eventually preferred Li to being taught by a “real foreigner” because she was someone they could relate to in different ways. The following is her reflection on the perceptions of her students:

> Often, I would have students (especially younger ones) come up to me and say how relieved they were to see an Asian face and that they were really intimidated by the other foreign teachers because they were truly foreign; some would even come and ask how it is that I could speak English so well, without any Chinese accent at all. For all those compliments, I am truly grateful for my background and the advantages it has brought me. It was a lot easier for them to ask questions and, actually some of them were really confident speaking to me as opposed to speaking with an actual person with coloured eyes or different coloured hair because they’re like what if they say something wrong and offend the other person and because I have the same face they feel I have the same culture and they can say anything and it’s ok to make mistakes because I would understand better than anybody else (lines 297 - 309).

Her reflections were influenced by her view of what is meant to be “truly foreign” in China. In this regard, not being considered “truly foreign” put her students at ease because they felt Li could relate to their struggles and their experiences because she is Chinese like them.
6.5 Marcus’ Profile

Marcus identified himself as an African-American and a native English speaker (NES). He considered himself a NES not because he is African-American but because he has chosen to do so. He has experience teaching in Japan and China. His story was centred around the conflict that arose from experiencing racism directly from his manager, the steps he took to analyse his experiences and ultimately confront his manager.

The following sections present four key events that occurred in Marcus’s restoried narrative and an important meta-commentary of his reflections upon his experiences.

6.5.1 Background introduction

Marcus’ story began with a very brief description of his background. He identified himself as an African-American and highlighted several key background details: he was born in the US, his ancestors arrived in the US four or five hundred years ago and he was raised in a traditional family. He did not identify himself as Black American but specifically African-American, hence the reference to his ancestry. He also pointed out that he was raised in a traditional family which implied that a father and mother were present. These details characterised Marcus as a “regular” American in contrast to backdrop of the negative stereotypical views of black Americans (e.g. single-parent home) that underpinned his experiences with racism.

The meta-commentary of regarding his NES identity is very direct,

“I think personally to me it means that I identify with a certain sort of cultural and linguistic history that is the United States and American culture. When I say I’m a native speaker I obviously identify with all those things” (lines 004 - 007).

He is aware that a NES racial identity is generally associated with being white, but considered language proficiency and a connection to “culture” as more essential. However, for Marcus a NES identity was ultimately a matter of personal choice and believed in the potential for anyone to possess a NES identity.

Continuing the “regular American” characterisation Marcus described his attitude towards work and education, performing in a way that presents him as an ambitious and
hard-working individual. Moreover, he decided to pursue a postgraduate degree in TESOL which is a way of performing his NEST role identity as one who is well educated and willing to take his career in TESOL more seriously.

6.5.2 Event A: Black people can’t find jobs in China

Events A - C recall three separate events in which Marcus experienced racism because of his Black- American identity at the hands of the manager of the school he taught at. Unlike other participants, Marcus did not discuss the reactions of this students but the focus was solely on what occurred between the manager and himself.

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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>When I first met my former employer, I was surprised by how much we had in common. We both came from the same region in the States and went to rival schools. We were not of the same ethnicity, but we were both ethnic minorities. I expected that we would be great friends and that we would have a very professional relationship. I thought because he was an ethnic minority he would be a little more understanding or more sympathetic. Unfortunately, after a few days into my new job, I began to have doubts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>One day, as my employer and I were walking down the street to purchase a cell phone from a local shop, he began to talk about the employment of black people in the teaching industry in China:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA/ERI</td>
<td>“You know, it’s difficult for black people to find jobs in China,” he said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Really,” I said. “Well, I have received four or five job offers here before accepting this position.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Uh huh,” he said unconvincsed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution/NRI</td>
<td>I was perplexed as to why he seemed so eager to discuss race and employment. I discussed the situation with my wife, who is a local. She said that he wanted me to grateful to him for having employed me. After all, no one else would to his mind.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.18: Event A in Marcus’s story

Marcus’s initial meeting with his employer was a positive experience which set up Marcus’ expectation that they would have an excellent working relationship. Additionally
his manager was an ethnic minority who Marcus felt would be more understanding when it came to issues of race and racism. Overall, Marcus had a very positive initial impression of his manager which would have contributed to the confusion and, disappointment he felt later on.

6.5.3 Event B: Series of micro-aggressions

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<th>Story elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Weeks following the first microaggression, he began to say more offensive things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Upon finding out that I had lived in Japan for a significant amount of time, he would say, “You’re too Japanese... I don’t think that it’s working for you. Why don’t you act like you used to in North Carolina when you used to drink 40s?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>At a Japanese Teppanyaki restaurant he suggested to a crowd of strangers that Ebonics was bad English despite my attempts to suggest otherwise. The crowd - they didn’t really care. One was a British girl and she asked him to say some things in African American English and he did and then she did.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Another time, when one of my co-workers suggested that I spoke Chinese very well, responded sarcastically, “Yeah, he’s a black Chinese.” He also showed movies at work of black people getting beat up by the police.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.19: Event B in Marcus’s story

In this event Marcus listed a series of smaller events to illustrate the concept of “micro-aggressions” that he discusses later in his story. They were presented as a group as a way emphasising the different types of racism levelled at him by his manager.

The first CCA was a comment on Marcus not being “Black enough” by not conforming to the implied stereotype of drinking large amounts of alcohol. In addition to the content, the manager positioned himself as an expert in Black behaviour by passing judgement on Marcus.

The second CCA is a public display of racism during dinner in which racist comments were made in front of a crowd. There were two levels of racism present during this smaller
event, the first was his manager, again, passing judgement on what consists as “Black”, but this time negatively assessing a variety of English closely attributed to Black Americans. The second level was the indifference of the crowd who failed to acknowledge the racism underpinning his manager’s comments and contributed to the situation by engaging with his manager through mocking African American English.

The last CCA was more a list to two separate instances of racism. Marcus did not provide the context in which they occurred other than what his manager said. The first comment on being a “Black Chinese” belittled Marcus’s ability to speak Chinese at a high level. The second comment on films was the only act that did not involved Marcus but implied that it was directed at Marcus.

6.5.4 Event C: Telling other about his experiences with racism

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>My initial response was to ignore him and focus on my work, especially since I was overseas in a foreign country. Two months later, I decided to quit this job and return to the US.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>After I returned home, I talked with the vice president of the company, on Skype, about these incidents...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>...and he agreed that what my employer did was not right. Once I told him about it he was like “Yeah, that wasn’t right,”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>...but I told someone else, some other co-workers, but most people thought yeah, they didn’t know what was going on. They didn’t really pay much attention to it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>One of them said, “Yeah you should have told me when this happened, actually,” and it was ok, I but didn’t. By the time I had brought this to their attention all 3 of my co-workers had quit. Everyone had quit basically within a year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.20: Event C in Marcus’s story

This final event in the series began with Marcus attempting to ignore his manager and the racism he experienced but he quit after a short period of time. It was implied that Marcus may have had enough. The main CCA of this event was Marcus telling other
people about the racism he experienced from his manager. The vice-president of the company would be in a position to potentially take action against the manager. It is not clear if any action was taken other than acknowledging that the manager’s actions were not acceptable. Marcus also told his co-workers who did not realise or recognise that their manager was being racist against Marcus. The fact that they also left the school leaves the situation unfinished because there was no one left to confront this manager about his racist behaviour.

Marcus’s story illustrated a different challenge faced by VEM-NESTs, namely racist stereotyping of their ethnic identity rather than their VEM-NEST identity. In his story, part of Marcus’ VEM-NEST performance was challenging the negative stereotyping of black Americans by his manager rather than addressing negative reactions to his performance as a NEST. In a very real sense Marcus’s VEM-NEST performance was more personal because the racism was directed at him as a black American rather than as him as a black NEST. Indeed, Marcus is very aware of the racism directed at him but, at the time, felt he was unable to challenge his manager directly.

### 6.5.5 Event D: Seeking external help to understand his experiences

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<th>Story elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Even after discussing what happened openly with others, I began to doubt that I had made the right decisions. “I should have been more assertive,” I thought. So I decided to take a class on racism at a University in the States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>I guess if I had been in the States I would have been more direct and upfront, but I was here when this happened. I felt like I could have been more upfront I think and could have said something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA/NRI</td>
<td>But on the other hand there are all kinds of bias, y’know like gender bias, like there’s a stereotype that men shouldn’t be too emotion or whatever or let go, and I was kind aware about that and I tried like just ignoring it, it wouldn’t be a problem. It’s just that I wondered if I had made the right decisions or maybe I could have handled this issue in a different way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>I took the course and I knew the professors and he was pretty much teaching people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
techniques to deal with racism and how to respond to it and how not to get stressed out. So it was a good course because there were other people on the course who got to share experiences that they had and ways that they could have gone back in time, ways they could have responded a bit better. That’s basically why I took the course.

Table 6.21: Event D in Marcus’s story

At the time the events took place, Marcus did not know how to effectively perform his VEM-NEST identity in a way that addressed the racism he faced. He realised he needed to learn how to adapt his performance and took the initiative to seek out external resources to help him adapt. Marcus took what he learned from this course and analysed his own experiences in his meta-commentary. He uses the concept of “micro-aggressions” as a way of understanding why his employer was acting the way he was, so that Marcus could learn from his past experiences and be better prepared for future incidents.

The first example of Marcus’s own analysis addresses his experiences in Event A, in which he rationalises his manager’s assumption that black people would find it difficult to find work in China:

“The intended or unintended messages that he conveyed to me were that: “(a) People of colour are not qualified, and (b) as a minority group member, you [must obtain] the position of authority through some affirmative action or quota program and not because of ability (p. 274). Despite being outside of America, my employer began to try to bring his racist baggage to the forefront of our work relationship” (lines 067 - 073).

Marcus’s analysis reveals the underlying American racial context that influences his experiences. He worked hard to present himself in his story as a “regular American” as a way of challenging the negative stereotyping of black Americans. Marcus’s background is not an exception but yet another facet to the complex and highly differentiated group of black Americans. In contrast, his manager had a monolithic view of black Americans based on negative stereotypes that pervade the American racial context. The quote above was the manager’s assumption that black people, such as Marcus, would find it more difficult to gain employment in China than in the USA because there are no laws that benefited black Americans.
His employer continued to draw upon negative stereotypes of black Americans in other instances. Event B was grouped together as a series of smaller events because they take place during Marcus’ employment period in China. The first of the series of micro-aggressions was directed at Marcus’ lack measuring up to his manager’s idea the performance of black American racial role identities, “You’re too Japanese... I don’t think that it’s working for you. Why don’t you act like you used to in North Carolina when you used to drink 40s?”. According to his manager, Marcus’s current racial role identity performance was not in considered “black American” enough. This act of judgement see his manager placing himself in the position of someone who believes they are able to judge what is and is not “black American” because he believes Marcus himself is unable to do so.

Part of the difficulties Marcus faced was influenced by his initial expectations of his new job and of his relationship with his manager, as lines 045 - 47 illustrated “I expected that we would be great friends and that we would have a very professional relationship. I thought because he was an ethnic minority he would be a little more understanding or more sympathetic.” Being as both were from ethnic minority backgrounds, it came as a surprise to Marcus that he was experiencing racism from a “fellow” ethnic minority, or perhaps someone he thought “should have known better”.

6.6 Darcia’s profile
Darcia’s story does not provide any details of her family background but instead began with her reasons for choosing to go abroad to teach English. Darcia identifies herself as an African - American and is very self aware of the racial context in the USA has influenced how she interprets new and unknown situations. She uses this awareness as a way of trying to find out what the people in her context thought of her. Her story recounted several of her experiences as an English language teacher in China and traces how she learned to manage the way she was perceived as a black VEM-NEST.

The following sections present four key events that occurred in Darcia’s restoried narrative and important meta-commentary of her reflections upon her experiences.
6.6.1 Background information: Going Abroad

In Darcia’s story, her racial identity is already made visible through the way she was aware of how black Americans are perceived in the USA. In her story she sought to present a positive representation of who she is as a black American while at the same time she shared her own insecurities and reflections about how she performed her racial identities. From her opening paragraph, Darcia presented herself as a hard-working individual who actively sought out opportunities to better her economic situation rather than let her circumstances dictate her future:

I stuck around long enough to experience 2 lay-offs from sales positions, one in hotel sales and the other in a production theatre. I relocated to Washington, D.C. as the market seemed more steady there. However, I found myself working 3 jobs, overworked, underpaid and devalued. I decided enough scraping for pennies because there was more to life than working 24-7 with no quality of life. There was more to the world than just the great country of USA, which right now ain’t so great for the unemployed. So finally, I skipped over to China after receiving and comparing several offers (lines 006 - 014).

This quote summarises what would have been a frustrating experience of seeking an ideal employment situation. Darcia decided she had enough and would try her luck abroad. This decision raises insecurities at different areas of her life, the first is with regards to her age:

But here I was, 2 degrees later, in my late twenties, 28 to be exact, just embarking on this opportunity. I felt a bit out of place as many of my co-workers were much younger, except for a few guys who were early thirties. But I will admit that it felt great when most Chinese looked at me and assumed I was fresh out of the university. They always comment on how young I look. I initially felt older around my colleagues, but I had one student who was Chinese say, “You, you’re so young, my mom’s older than you.” I don’t think that the kids felt like that, it was just my personal insecurity (lines 016 - 027).

The only background detail Darcia shared was that she had two degrees. It is not clear if they are the same degree level or if one is undergraduate and postgraduate. Regardless, this detail is significant because it is her way of performing a positive representation of black Americans as educated and therefore qualified to obtain high professional level positions. This detail also indicated the passage of time in that she was not fresh out of university but rather was an educated individual with a significant amount of work experience. Therefore her efforts to find work abroad is akin to starting over which she felt, at her age, was not the social norm. This resulted in Darcia feeling out of place among her colleagues in general. However, she was aware that her perception of where
she “should be at her age” was her own insecurity she brought with her to China. Nonetheless, this contributed to her overall sense of “feeling out of place” when combined with her initial fears of how she might be negatively perceived as a black American.

6.6.2 Event A: Preparing to get stared at

Darcia used particular stereotypical assumptions of black Americans to prepare herself for the possibility of being negatively perceived during new and unfamiliar encounters. In a way, she prepared her performance in advance through actively finding out as much information as she could in order to create a suitable defence in the form of knowing what to expect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Upon first arriving, the reactions I got were not very shocking. One of the managers had clearly stated that in this culture, it is quite common to point and stare at foreigners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>I figured that this is such homogeneous environment. They just don’t have anything else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I’m really big on just asking tons of questions. Before I got here I asked thousands of questions, even to the people hiring me, especially the foreigners, some of whom had been here about 10 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>So it was like: get ready for people to stare, point or laugh, cause they don’t see anything wrong with that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>I wasn’t too shocked. Quite honestly it seemed normal to me because they live in such a homogeneous environment where it’s not common to see someone of a different race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>In Western countries, an American, Canadian, Frenchman, etc. can be black, white, Asian, Hispanic, etc. but in China, a Chinese person doesn’t come in different ethnicities so they gawk at anything and anyone unlike them, especially in the city where I am. I think with Shanghai being more metropolitan and used to foreigners, and Beijing hosting the 2008 Olympics, they are a bit less wowed and stunned when</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foreigners. They seem to have more etiquette and conduct themselves in a
classier fashion than the people in Guangzhou who find it quite normal to point,
laugh, snap pictures or have a conversation about you in front of your face.

It’s funny, I met people later who had been here for a while and they seemed to
have had more of a problem with it than I did. “What’s the problem? You should be
used to it!”

But I’ve found myself getting more annoyed as I’ve been here longer. You know,
now I understand how they were then, I am now. I’ve been here a long time; I
shouldn’t be such a spectacle. Get over it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation/NRI</th>
<th>seeing foreigners. They seem to have more etiquette and conduct themselves in a classier fashion than the people in Guangzhou who find it quite normal to point, laugh, snap pictures or have a conversation about you in front of your face.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resolution/NRI</td>
<td>It’s funny, I met people later who had been here for a while and they seemed to have had more of a problem with it than I did. “What’s the problem? You should be used to it!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.22: Event A in Darcia’s story

For example, during Event A she prepared to be stared at in China through heeding her warnings from her manager. Darcia came to realise that people stared at her because she was a foreigner and not necessarily because she was black. Knowing this helped to ease her feelings of isolation and enabled her to see herself as part of a group, which in this instance, were the other foreigners who had similar experiences of being stared at. Furthermore, as part of this group she began to share their rationale of why they get stared at and in doing so, reinforced an “us vs. them / Western vs. Oriental” binary.

Her manager continued to warn her in an attempt to prepare her for the possibility of being negatively perceived. While this was well intentioned, it only reinforced her sense of being different:

I feel like certain things a lot of people say that African American people are too sensitive, so I kept that in my head - Don’t be too sensitive about too many comments. But over the course of a year, my foreign manager did say a few things where I was just like “Ok, that’s enough, I get your point.” He made about three or four comments and it kind of got a little frustrating, but I wasn’t upset with him. I was just like, “Ok, you don’t have to reiterate everything every time I’m the different one,” but I understood why he was saying it (lines 055 - 062).

In the above quote, Darcia commented on African Americans being “too sensitive” and how she may be viewed as someone looking for racism and so attempted to manage her approach to new situations. With her manager reiterating her otherness, while well intentioned, caused her to become even more aware of how different she was from other teachers.
For Darcia, being “sensitive” to racism was her way of trying to understand a new situation in order to perform her VEM-NEST role identity in ways that mediated her reaction should the situation turn into a racist encounter. In this sense, her thought processes and the insights she has gained were made accessible through the way she presented her experiences from her point of view. Her story contained several events that were presented as though she was re-living the event, moment by moment. It made for a very interesting and highly reflexive storytelling approach because she clearly shared what she was thinking at the time, and what she thought of the event afterwards. Often there is a clear distinction between the NRI and ERI because she chose to re-live the event rather than describe it.

6.6.3 Event B: Manager’s helpful remarks before her first class

Events B-D presented a series of embedded events that took place within her first year of teaching. Event B presented her very first day of teaching and sets the scenes where she shared her initial fears, exasperated by her manager’s good intentions, that sought to make her aware of how the students might react.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>On my first day of teaching I was so nervous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>One reason was because I WAS NOT a teacher and second because I did not know if I would be well received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>Even one of my managers had made a comment that the kindergarteners may cry if they never saw a black person before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>So that did not settle well with me. I had all sorts of thoughts running through my head.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6.23: Event B in Darcia’s story*

This is the first instance that Darcia mentioned her lack of teaching experience and training, which would have compounded her feeling of insecurity. She then changes to NRI perspective by reflecting on the possible reasons she could be negatively perceived
and, in doing so, presents the broader American racial context that influenced her reflections:

My country has an awful history and racist system when it comes to dealing with blacks (which I hate to be called. I look at myself and see a brown girl. I digress...) so I was not sure whether some of that mentality, judgments, and mind-sets had been imposed on Chinese. Were they taught to dislike blacks as well? Let's face it, there are certain negative stigmas associated with being black. Education wise, I assumed that Chinese would wonder whether I even speak proper English? Did I go to college? I had nightmares that the parents would request a new teacher or pull their child out of my class once they found out. Boy was I nervous (lines 068 - 076).

The “stigma” associated with being black refers to the negative stereotyping of Black Americans in the USA, such as being uneducated (e.g. “Did I go to college?” = Is she educated? Is she qualified?). As such, her initial comment of preferring to be called a “brown girl” alludes to Darcia wanting to distance herself from being negatively associated with the black label. Moreover she wondered if her potential students and their parents were influenced by the negative discourses regarding black Americans. She has no way of knowing if this was the case but mentally prepared herself should the situation turn negative. For Darcia, she was aware that she was already performing as a VEM-NEST. To some degree this position was a conscious choice on Darcia’s part. The awareness she brought into her context was strategic because she used this knowledge to inform how she performed her VEM-NEST role identity during specific situations.

### 6.6.4 Event C: Experiences teaching first class

Event C described in detail what she did prior to her lesson and what occurred during the lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>When I arrived, I got the usual &quot;WHOOOAAA! Black person!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>I’m not sure what it meant. I didn’t know if it meant I was cool, feared or what.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>But I knew that on my first day, I had to work harder than all the other white teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI/CCA</td>
<td>When you are white, that already qualifies you enough and people rarely question your abilities. You could send a mass murderer in to teach the kids and as long as he was white, people wouldn’t question it. So I knew I had to step my game up to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation / ERI</td>
<td>Before leaving the house I tried to look as pretty as possible (since Chinese are infatuated with beauty).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>Not to mention, first impressions set the tone for the entire relationship or situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>So I straightened my hair, rosied up my cheeks, curled my eyelashes and wore some nice slacks and shoes with my uniform work shirt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI/CCA</td>
<td>I did all this while my white roommate, hopped out the shower, tied her wet hair in a bun and rushed out the door.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>During class...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>... I smiled excessively, made lots of funny faces and voices (since I was teaching low grades) and spoke with impeccable enunciation and pronunciation in a very loud and clear tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>Luckily, it doesn’t take much to wow little kids and they don’t have as many reservations about dealing with a foreigner as older students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>By the time you get older, you have been influenced by your parents, culture, TV and all sorts of stereotypes about a group of people. Little kids are only initially afraid of someone who is different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>Once they see you a few times and become familiar, its smooth sailing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6.24: Event C in Darcia’s story*

Event C is made up of two smaller events. The first event took place within the classroom whereas the second event took place the morning of Darcia’s first day of teaching, at her flat. The first orientation presented the moment that Darcia met her students (e.g. “WHOOOAAA! Black person!”) and, at the time, was not sure how to interpret their reactions. She then presented the CCA that summarised her view of why she felt the need to be prepared: “But I knew that on my first day, I had to work harder than all the
other white teachers.” Darcia then moved on to explain her point of view, based on her views of how black Americans are perceived negatively.

This explanation is an introduction to the second situation in which Darcia contrasted the effort she made to be presentable with her white roommate who made little or no attempt. She presented this example to illustrate her previous point that white people are already regarded as qualified or able and therefore do not need to make as much of an effort as black people.

Darcia then brought the reader back to the present in which she described what she did during class. Her actions were a particular kind of performance, for example, she “smiled excessively, made lots of funny faces and voices” and spoke clearly. This performance was a way of presenting herself as an approachable, friendly and dynamic teacher. This resulted in her class accepting her as their teacher, which Darcia believed was because they were young and have less prejudices about other people.

Furthermore her performance was a carefully crafted effort done in order to create a positive impression of herself as a black English language teacher. Darcia names this as “first day of school act” (line 116) in her reflections later, which imply that her performance was not only crafted, but temporary once the desired outcome was achieved.

6.6.5 Event D: The substitute teaching experience

The next event could be considered Darcia’s main event because she goes to great lengths to re-enact what had happened but also reflects extensively on her experiences afterwards. The table is an edited version of the event that depicts key story elements considered central to the analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Just as I had gotten settled in and was feeling well received by the Chinese, I was hit with this disturbing dose of reality. I tutored for ___ one Saturday morning in place of my colleague and it did not unfold very well. Originally I spoke to ___ and she was in desperate need of a teacher because my friend abruptly quit, and didn’t want to do it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
anymore. She asked me would I do it. I only really wanted to do it one time and see
how it was because I didn’t really want to go that far every morning. So I was like,
“Sure I’ll cover for you this weekend.” She said “Can you please send me your
resume?” and I was like “Sure.” I sent her my resume and my picture is on there.

She texted me directions on how to get to the school, but when I got there, she was
all “Oh! Oh, I thought you were a white person?!” I was quite shocked because I had
sent her my resume. I said “You have my resume” and she said, “Oh, I had no time to
look at that.” So, I was like, “First of all, you don’t even know if I’m qualified, and
you’re shocked, and it’s your own fault, you didn’t take time to look at my
qualifications”, and she was all “It’s ok, it doesn’t matter, it’s cool.”

When I got inside I had the reaction that I had the most times with kids, they were like
“Wow! Whoa!” but then when I started teaching they were excited and they
participated. There were some parents staring in through the window. They saw that
their kids were engaged and that was that.

___ wasn’t a mean person, she was just abruptly honest, like most Chinese people
are. You know – oh, you’re short / oh, you’re fat / oh, you’re dark. So they’ll just say
whatever, so she wasn’t a mean person, she was just typically Chinese. She wasn’t
very professional though in my opinion

After that I wouldn’t really want to work for her anyway, because she seemed too
scattered. She put a school or learning centre together, she rents space from a school
and...

... she told me later how “Some of the parents would be upset if you’re not a white
person, maybe I would be paying you less and I’d still be charging them the same
amount of money.”

She really didn’t say that. She was just “I’m very sorry but some of the parents, they
maybe think I’m not being fair.” She didn’t really know the words to use. That’s what
she said.

Table 6.25: Event D in Darcia’s story

This event was introduced as Darcia’s “reality check”. Against the backdrop of her initial
insecurities and the lengths she has gone to mediate the possibility of being negatively
perceived because she is black, Darcia seemed to have arrived at a place where she was feeling more comfortable as a VEM-NEST in China. Her comfort, however, was regarded as a kind of illusion that did not last as described in the orientation of this event.

Unlike Events B and C, which would have been repeated throughout her teaching experiences in general, Event D was a unique, isolated incident (e.g. “I tutored for ___ one Saturday morning in place of my colleague…”). The CCA was the manager of the school explicitly expecting a white NEST despite Darcia having sent her photo with her resume. The manager not only declared her racial expectation (e.g. “I thought you were a white person!”) but addressed this comment to Darcia directly. Understandably Darcia replied that she was not at fault because she had sent a photo, placing the onus on the manager who did not take responsibility but instead, moved the action along by having Darcia start teaching. Darcia described her experiences teaching at his school in a way that conveyed ‘business as usual’ in that the positive reactions from her students and their parents were from her performances as a VEM-NEST. She mentions the parents’ positive reactions to reinforce that they did not seem to have a problem with her race.

In her reflections Darcia decided that the manager was not intentionally malicious but ignorant and unprofessional based on what Darcia observed of her that day. These views led to the closing of this event in which Darcia decided that even if this manager did know she was Black, she would not have wanted to continue working for her because she was unprofessional and disorganised. However, the manager did present her rationale to Darcia, which she interpreted in her own words.

6.6.6 Reflections on Event D

This event was one that Darcia felt was a reminder of the ever present possibly that she would be negatively perceived because she was black.

It’s like with any situation where you might like hope for the best but expect the worst, and when the worst doesn’t happen you start eliminating those thoughts from your mind - Oh it’s ok, I shouldn’t expect the worst - but then if it happens you’re - Oh I knew this would happen. It confirms in your mind that it does exist, it can happen, but I also thought that’s not everybody, it’s not the majority, it’s just her as a person, she wasn’t very organised. If she’d looked at my resume in the first place she wouldn’t have had that problem. She just would have been “I don’t think we can use you” (lines 219 - 227).
Darcia remained cautiously optimistic that she may not encounter discrimination in the future, but was prepared mentally should the situation arise. There was a sense of disappointment in her reflections because up to Event D, her experiences in China were largely positive.

6.6.7 Reflections on her own insecurities

Darcia could be characterised as a black VEM-NEST role identity, because her performance specifically focuses on developing positive representations of black Americans in order to address any negative stereotypes that her audience may have. She is aware of how she may be negatively stereotyped as a black American but she is not sure if her audience harbours any of the prejudice she knows of. From her experiences as a black American in the USA Darcia feels there is may be a real possibility that she may face racism and so does what she can to prepare for what she thinks may be the inevitable.

However, there was a transition in Darcia’s awareness of her black VEM-NEST identity in which she felt she did not need to prove her worth in her current teaching context abroad as much as she would if she were back in the USA.

I don’t really feel like I have to prove myself as much anymore. I think a lot of that was self imposed last year, because they were pretty receptive to me, and so I have to get that out of my head, that’s something that I need to do. I feel like I have to prove myself in my own country more than I do here. Because the need is great for an English teacher and as a foreigner generally you’re regarded highly – it’s like “Wow, foreigner!” into our country, whereas in my country it’s like if we have the option for picking you for a job it’s like “Hmm. No, we’re going to go with this other person” or whatever. Not all the time, but it’s more of an issue in my own country (lines 272 - 281).

Her initial experiences showed her that black Americans are not always regarded in the same way in China, and was able to relax to the extent that she felt less defensive than before. However, Darcia remains “on alert” in recognising that as a black VEM-NEST she will continue to make more of an effort than her white colleagues in order to create a positive representation of black Americans.
6.7 Patricia’s Profile

Patricia identifies herself as a black-American and was a US army veteran. She did not go into detail about her background prior to teaching English abroad and her restored narrative primarily focuses on her experiences as a VEM-NEST, initially in South Korea and then in China, where she was currently employed at the time of this study.

Patricia has a clear awareness of the negative perceptions of black people which to an extent explains the way she reacted when faced with racist situations in her teaching contexts. She provided several key events that illustrated her awareness and reflected extensively on her own perceptions of what it means to be a black VEM-NEST.

The following sections present four key events that occurred in Patricia’s restored narrative and an important meta-commentary of her reflections upon her experiences.

6.7.1 Background introduction

There was very little detail given about Patricia’s background prior to becoming an ELT. She is originally from Virginia but is now based out of Florida. She is a US Army veteran who worked in patient administration (line 005). This brief introduction was a deliberate choice made by Patricia because the main focus of her story was her ELT experiences in South Korea and China, bringing her audience to the present day. The only other detail made apparent in her introduction is the way she identifies herself:

I am a 37-year-old Black American female - African American if you want to be politically correct. I’ve been Negro, coloured, Afro American etc. Guess it just depends on the decade (lines 002 - 008).

While Patricia identified herself as black - American, she was aware of the different ways she is perceived via the labels she lists. She invites the reader to call her “African American”, indicating that it was not her choice of label but that others could make that choice. This implied that she may be aware of her African ancestry but does not necessarily identify with this background. Additionally, she listed other labels which she did not invite the reader to use, but were presented to illustrate the different labels that have been applied to her. This theme of having different labels applied to her is a reoccurring topic throughout Patricia’s story.
Patricia does not explicitly state she is a NES in her story, however on several occasions she has used her American identity as a way of explaining her NES role identity. In her story she performed her VEM-NEST identity as one who had experienced racism before becoming an ELT and uses this to analyse the different situations she shares in her story.

The first two events are presented to contrast her experiences in different schools. Events A and B took place in a small rural town in South Korea in which Patricia was the only native English speaker and was teaching on a new programme implemented at the schools she taught. Event A describes her experiences teaching at a primary school and Event B took place in a secondary school in the same town.

### 6.7.2 Event A: Primary school experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>As I’m sure you know, they had a lot of getting used to, to put it lightly. So I guess that had to be an adjustment for them, especially my co-teacher and also for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Well actually, we were supposed to be team teaching together but she didn’t want it that way, so she asked if we could split it, so that she would teach the class on certain days and I would teach the class on certain days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>I felt like it wasn’t a very good arrangement, but that’s the way she wanted it, she didn’t want to teach with me and I understood that, I wasn’t going to force it on her so I said fine, let’s do it that way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation/NRI</td>
<td>The students were great. I almost felt like a rock star really, because I was the first person or colour that many of them had encountered, in their lives. So a lot of the time they would come to me, with paper, asking for autographs and things like that! Wanting to sit with me and things like that: it was really great.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| CCA/ERI              | There’s always a few who would yell out ‘Africa’ when I would talk about my background, where I come from and who I am. You know you’re always going to have some students who want to be the practical joker or the class clown. But for the most part they were interested in Western culture, they wanted to know
Resolution

more about America, and I tried my best to be a good representation of that because I feel that teaching EFL is not just about teaching English, there are so many other aspects that come with it. Cultural diversity is a big part of it.

Table 6.26: Event A in Patricia’s story

In Event A she found herself having to comply with the Korean teacher’s preference to teach separately. Patricia understood that this individual did not want to teach with her but did not explain why. Despite the reason Patricia is left to teach on her own and took the opportunity to educate her students on “cultural diversity” by presenting a positive representation of black Americans to her young students. For example, the second CCA saw her students assume she was from Africa because she was black. Patricia was aware of this perception and used it as a way of introducing them to her notion of “cultural diversity”. During this event, she was aware that she would have been the first VEM-NEST her students met and so it would have been natural for them to assume she was from Africa. Her presence was a way of illustrating the notion of multiculturalism to her students.

6.7.3 Event B: Secondary school experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>At my secondary school in the same city, there was another foreign teacher, she was white though. It was a big contrast, a very, very big contrast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>It seemed like she was put, more on a pedestal, by the staff. She would get invited to things and I would have to stay behind, and the excuse would always be, because it’s my secondary school, I’m not really primary school, and she is the lecturer at the primary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>And you kinda know. School trips, picnics, just things like that you know? Dinners, personal dinners with the principal. I was never a part of that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>I did mention it to her, and there was always a reason some “logical explanation” that they tried to make for it. But when you’ve experienced racism your whole life, you pretty much know when people act in a kind of why that’s so blatant. They don’t make it too obvious, but you already know. I just kind of ignored it really.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
All I could do was do this job that I knew how to do, as a teacher, and find things to do on my own, with other teachers who were foreigners there. And they would have their own complaints too, we would sit together sometimes and they would talk about, they would have things they didn’t like about their school.

Table 6.27: Event B in Patricia’s story

Event B contrasts her generally positive experiences in Event A. In this situation Patricia was deliberately excluded from specific activities while her white colleague was invited to different professional and personal events. The different explanations given to justify her exclusion were recognised by Patricia as a veil for the decision not to extend any invitation to her because she was black.

Her past experiences with racism enabled her to recognise this tactic and allowed her to accept the situation on the basis that there was little she could do to challenge this practice. Instead she chose to continue to act professionally (“All I could do was do this job that I knew how to do...”) and meet other foreign teachers outside of her employment situation as a way of gaining some perspective on her own experiences through exchanging stories.

6.7.4 Event C: The teacher trainer as just an observer

This event illustrates the unwillingness of other teachers to challenge racism in ELT.

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<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Actually one of the teachers that was in our circle of friends, he was a teacher trainer, he trained Korean English teachers, and he sometimes, he would tell me about how they would have quite candid conversations with him, about how they blatantly didn’t like black people, or different types of Asians, and they would just tell him this, in his classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>He saw this as a problem, and I asked him “What did you tell them?” and he said it really wasn’t his place to tell them how to feel, or how to be, and they should know right from wrong, and he felt like he didn’t want to make them uncomfortable with being free, like they should be able to talk about how they feel. He was just more of an observer you know? He didn’t want to give his personal opinions or feelings about it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.28: Event C in Patricia’s story

In this event, the teacher trainer was in a position to actively challenge racist perceptions of the Korean teachers in his class. The CCA is not the racist views of the Korean teacher, but the unwillingness of the teacher trainer to engage with his students and challenge them on their views. His rationale for his position was to allow them space to speak their mind and his role was to observe but not judge.

It can be surmised that the teacher trainer in question was white because his Korean students would not have shared their negative views with a black or Asian teacher. Moreover, his unwillingness to challenge his students positioned him as an outsider, in which he felt he did not need to talk about race because it is not his business. His position reflects the view that issues of race and racism are the responsibility of ethnic minorities because of their experiences with the topic. As a white teacher, he positioned himself as an observer, thus, removing himself because issues of race are not topics that directly affect him.

6.7.5 Contrasting experiences in South Korea and China

In Patricia’s story she reflects upon how her experiences in South Korea were different to what she expected to experience in China.

My experiences in Korea haven’t actually changed how I approach teaching English because I can’t really let my experience in one place affect how I teach. You take some of that with you, especially the negative aspects of it can affect you wherever you go so I really try to wipe the slate clean, but it’s really hard not to compare, like for example when I walk by a group of school kids and I’m expecting them to laugh - so be ready. Then I’ll walk by expecting to hear that and I don’t, and I’m like “Wow” because in Korea they’d be pointing at me and laughing (lines 170 - 176).

Patricia acknowledged that the racism she faced in South Korea had influenced her to some degree, but she continued to work on maintaining an open-minded outlook. Moreover the difference in contexts would have contributed to the way she was perceived.
China is very different. I didn’t get stared at or pointed to or shouted at on the street. Sometimes I’d see a group of kids walking down towards me and I’d think “Ok, here we go, get ready” and then when they’d arrive, they’d ignore me. At _____ it’s like the United Nations. We’ve got teachers with different nationalities, different ethnicities. So the students are fortunate enough to be exposed to different people. And the parents are exposed to different ethnicities. I think I got a thicker skin from working in Korea so when I got to China I was ready. But it’s different here. I mean, I’ve only been here for 4 months but I’ve noticed the difference. I think because Shanghai is such huge city with lots of foreigners it helps. I don’t get asked about Africa or whatever (lines 215 - 225).

In South Korea she worked in a small rural town in a state school that had implemented a new English language curriculum. In China, she lived in Shanghai, one of the largest cities and was employed by a well-known language school who had a multi-national and multi-racial staff.

6.7.6 Event D: Her Chinese Assistant Teacher

In this event Patricia shared her experiences working with the local Chinese teaching staff, and found it was a more positive experience overall.

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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Working with my AT (Assistant Teacher) she’s really open to learning about different cultures. I mean she’s young and eager to learn. She’s asked me about my background and about Western culture and America. She’s worked with other foreigners before so she’s used to working with people from different nationalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>But my AT is...is in denial I think. She sort of makes excuses when the parents take their kids out of my class. It’s like, don’t blame China kind of a thing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>We don’t really talk about it or get to discuss it. People here mostly ask where I’m from and I tell them I’m American and then they just move on from there. They don’t ask me about my accent or the way I speak. As far as I know they see me as a native speaker.</td>
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Table 6.29: Event D in Patricia’s story

In the orientation the Chinese AT was someone who wanted to work with Patricia and who showed an interest in Patricia’s background. The Chinese AT also showed an awareness of how black Americans like Patricia could be negatively perceived by mediating situations (e.g. Parents taking their children out of Patricia’s class because
she’s black) indirectly. Patricia, however, interpreted this as “denial” because her AT did not directly engage with issues of race.

Her relationship with the local staff was one of the differences Patricia noticed between her experiences working in South Korea and in China. The other was the way she was treated by the management at her school.

Disney English is like the Disney Family – we’re all treated equally. My manager is a white South African and he sees every teacher as equals. I think we’re really supported here. I’m invited – I mean I got invited to a barbecue at his! Oh, if I could I would do it all again (lines 249-251).

Patricia’s surprise with receiving a personal invitation to a social at her manager’s residence was a meaningful act because it demonstrated to her that she was indeed regarded as an equal member of staff.

6.8 Nora’s profile

Nora identified herself as black-British and while there were not many events featured in Nora’s restoried narrative, she focused the majority of her story on what it means to be black-British. Her family background is black-Jamaican and she shared her experiences growing up with a family that used Patois, yet encouraged her and her sister to speak English with the “right” British accent. Nora discussed her Black-British identity in relation to culture and how she feels more British than Jamaican, yet, is no less “black” because she feels more British.

Before becoming an ELT Nora worked as a coach and manager in a business setting. She brought some of these experiences with her and used her skills to foster good working relationships with her students and her colleagues. Her VEM-NEST experiences have mostly been in English speaking countries, which has affected how she was perceived.

The following sections present two key events that occurred in Nora’s restoried narrative and an important meta-commentary of her reflections upon her experiences.
6.8.1 Background information

Nora began her story with discussing what it means for her to be black British and what it means to be a NES. These two aspects were closely related because she considered the performance of both as a balancing act between what she termed as “acclimatising” and maintaining a cultural identity.

However, as I have a very large extended family, and began visiting Jamaica from the age of four, my cultural heritage was instilled within me by my parents and other relatives. I grew up with mostly my nuclear family but I had a lot of contact with my extended family so with visits rather than living in the same area, so to speak. It really involved getting together for birthdays, celebrations and eating certain foods, listening to certain music. I suppose having a shared consciousness as being different but open conversations of overcoming those differences or - I don’t know - acclimatising. When I say open conversation I mean nothing explicit. It wasn’t a case of “We’re different and we’re going to actively try to stay different.” It was kind of we want to try to acclimatise as much as possible and make the most of the opportunities of being here whilst still keeping an identity in terms of say food or music or language – this pidgin English that was spoken in the house. It was sort of having a balancing act, certainly not trying to blend in too much and lose a sense of identity (lines 018 - 026).

Nora viewed “acclimatising” in terms of maintaining her Jamaican heritage within the UK and at the same time being part of British society without too much compromise. She alluded to having “a shared consciousness as being different but open conversations of overcoming those differences”, but did not provide examples of what this meant. However what was implied is that this balancing act of acclimatising is an on-going process.

Nora listed food, music and language as aspects of culture that she and her family sought to maintain as part of the acclimatising process. The rest of her restoried narrative focused on language as a feature of how she defined her identity. For example, her parents were aware of when it was more acceptable to use their Jamaican accents and when it was necessary to change it.

On reflection, I suppose I didn’t use Patois because my parents would “tone down” their accents and speak “uniform” English if speaking to someone from a different ethnic background. They’d switch if they were on the phone with someone that wasn’t Jamaican, or who wouldn’t understand Patois or if they were speaking to anybody who wouldn’t understand Patois at any point (lines 042 - 047).

Changing one’s accent was part of how Nora’s family created a more “British” performance in order to become more acceptable in specific situations with specific audiences. This was their way of balancing their Jamaican cultural heritage with
“assimilating” into the dominant UK culture. However, for Nora, her parents expected her not to follow in their footsteps, and actively corrected Nora’s own accent.

My mum would go as far as to correct my “black country” accent. I didn’t really notice. I probably didn’t really notice because probably more picking up black country accent rather than Patois because Patois was something spoken only ever really in the home but once I started going to school as well I was probably spending more time speaking socially then than when I was at home. So it was that that I was picking up and it was that that was being corrected (lines 049 - 055).

Nora’s parents had a particular view of what how British English ought to sound. They were aware that their own Jamaican accent and Nora’s “black country” accent could be negatively perceived and sought to change Nora’s accent to increase the chances that she would more positively perceived in the broader UK society.

Nora’s parents were aware that perceptions of accent were also closely related to their view that black-British people, as a group, had the potential to be negatively stereotyped. Nora’s story did not go into detail about how she could be negatively perceived as a black-British person, other than her parents made her aware that she needed to take it into account.

Additionally, my parents were very open about the fact that my ethnicity could prove to be a barrier to achievement if I allowed it to be and as such, they enthusiastically encouraged and supported my learning throughout the education system. I guess, they made me aware of the “hoops” that I would need to jump through to be “successful” (i.e. it was a given that my sister and I would go to university although neither of our parents had) (lines 058 - 063).

They felt that there was that sort of rhetoric - if it’s you and a white person going for a job, for instance, and you are going to have to work that extra bit harder to get that place sort of thing rather than the white person. You are going to have to do a bit more. So there was all this sense of you are going to have to do a bit more (lines 190 - 194).

In Nora’s story, being an educated Black-British woman was considered by her parents a necessity in order to be considered on equal terms with white people in the UK. In Nora’s story, her parents considered themselves working class and saw education as a way of upward social mobility for Nora. In preparation for moving upwards, her parents believed Nora needed to sound a certain way in order to be accepted in a new economic level. Therefore, meeting British NES role norms was considered a necessity. Nora’s British NES performance needed to meet the British NES role norms of accent and type of English spoken in order to become more acceptable. From Nora’s point of view, Patois was
English but she understood that she could not use it as her first language if she wanted to be considered a British NES.

It felt obvious to me that Patois also would not figure in my mother’s vision of how I should speak to “get ahead” in a predominantly white society! I think then attached to that was a sense of, well people that do that, that speak a certain way order to get ahead (lines 070 - 073).

Nora has learned to adapt her NES role identity performance to meet the NES role norms during specific situations for specific audiences. Her accent was different when she was with her own family, and changed when she was with her partner’s family, and was different again when she was at work. Yet, all these different accent performances were all Nora.

For instance, I come from a working class background and I’m conscious now that a lot of the people that I interact with are probably more from a middle class background. I’m conscious of that and conscious of sounding a particular way in certain groups (lines 099 - 103).

I know I speak pretty much like this all the time, but I know if I was with family and friends like I say my language would probably change a lot because if I was just speaking like this all the time they’d probably look at me like – “Why you speaking so formally” maybe or so structured, I don’t know. But it kind of changes (lines 107 - 111).

6.8.2 Event A: Being a NES and “mildly bilingual” in Patois

Regardless of changing her accent Nora identifies herself as a NES because English is her first language. She understands Patois but does not speak it. In one of the few events she shared, Nora recalled a situation when her parents spoke to her in Patois:

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<th>Story elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>I definitely consider myself a native speaker of English - somebody where it’s their first language, where it’s the first language that they would choose to use, I think - because, bar Patois, which I only realised about 4 years ago that I’m mildly bilingual at least enough to be able to understand because when I was leaving to go to Australia we had a party and some of my friends came around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>They said “We can’t understand a word your dad’s saying!” and “Alright, ok, I don’t understand why because he’s clearly clear” and they were like, “No he’s not!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution/NRI</td>
<td>So anyways it’s all that we’ve spoken, really, and granted my parents would respond to me in Patois when I was speaking to them because it’s English based and it was totally decipherable for me. Yeah there’s no sense of not being a native</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It’s not something that I doubt.

Table 6.30: Event A in Nora’s story

In the orientation Nora clearly stated that she considered herself a native speaker of English. However, she stated that is also “mildly bilingual”, meaning that she could understand Patois, as illustrated in the CCA because she could understand her father but her friends at the time could not. She goes on to clarify that she was “mildly bilingual” because Patois was the language used in her family but maintained that she is a NES.

Nora considers herself as black-British, in which she considers her cultural heritage being made up of both Jamaican and “(big city) British culture”, with the emphasis on being black first and foremost, and British second.

I would describe myself as Black-British. I’m aware of the colour of my skin first and foremost. I then am aware of my cultural heritage. However, that heritage is made up of both Jamaican and (big city) British culture. Well, I don’t know whether or not I might have said it in the story that I feel Black first, and British second but not Jamaican because when I go to Jamaica I get culture shock as much as I’ve got this heritage it’s still not the same as being out in the country and having everything around (lines 127 - 133).

The notion of “(big city) British culture” suggests that there is, in contrast, a “(small city) British culture” that Nora does not identify with. Moreover she did not define what she meant by “(big city) British culture” but it may be inferred that she has had experienced living in a large UK city. Also in this quote Nora emphasised her black identity because she was conscious that others would be more likely to define her based on this aspect rather than on her British identity. This awareness was taught to her by her parents, and she used this awareness to inform her different role identity performances.

6.8.3 Event B: “The Colour Purple” question

One event that unintentionally challenged her black identity was when one of her EFL students asked for her opinion of the book “The Colour Purple”.

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<th>Story elements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>The only occasion that sticks out in my mind where I was a little stunned by a question posed by a student in a “getting to know you” sessions was when I was working in Melbourne, Australia. I was covering an advanced class and after the</td>
</tr>
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</table>

students had interviewed their partner and introduced them to me, I said they could ask me any questions.

There were a number of the standard questions I’ve detailed above and then one female Korean student said to me very sheepishly, “I hope you don’t mind me asking…but I’ve never met a black person before…and so I was just wondering...what your opinion is of the book The Colour of Purple” (I’ve paraphrased here).

I was a little lost for words by the sincerity of the question steeped in the notion that every black person must have read the book. I think I was also thrown as I felt a little shame that I hadn’t read the book, especially as it is on my bookshelf and in that moment I felt that as a Black woman, and furthermore, as someone who studied literature written for ethnic minorities as part of my degree, I really should have read this book and thus the question was totally legitimate and I felt I had somehow “let down” my heritage by not being able to answer this question.

Fumbling for words, I explained to the student that I hadn’t read the book and that I had watched the film, but that it was a long time ago. She seemed a little embarrassed by my response as if her question hadn’t been legitimate, which I felt desperately guilty about as I feel it took her a great deal of courage to ask the question in the first place. I assured her that it was a great question and that I should have read the book and would go and read the book (which I admit I still have not!).

In her retrospective reflections, Nora did not view this event negatively and while her student’s question was genuinely curious, Nora recognised that there was an underlying assumption.

I think she thought - and I think that this is an odd thing to think to be honest - on reflection, I think she thought surely if you’re a black, and maybe a black woman, surely you’ve read that book. She assumed that every black woman would have read that book and I don’t know if there are possibly some books in other religions or races or faiths where it’s kind of you have to read these books to know your history, to know your heritage, you should have read this book and I assumed that she thought that maybe that was one of those books. The reason why I feel guilty about it because she’s probably absolutely right! I should have read the book (lines 357 - 365).

This quote illustrated Nora’s the process of understanding racial role norms that were expected of her VEM-NEST performance. “The Colour Purple”, by Alice Walker, was considered as one of “those books” that black people know about and since Nora had not
read the book, she did not meet this particular student’s role norm of “being black”. Nora’s guilt implied that she agreed with this racial role norm.

Nora was made keenly aware that her black identity may be perceived negatively but has not experienced discrimination as a VEM-NEST herself. Nora could sympathise with the racial challenges to VEM-NEST identity on an intellectual level but she herself has not experienced racism while working as an ELT. When experiencing challenges to her authority at work, she considered these more personality or circumstantial rather than racially motivated.

I’m not saying that everything was plain sailing and I’m sure that my name was called in vain a number of times but on a whole there wasn’t a sense of...there were corpulous challenges in meetings but I think that was, or I’d like to think that was more personality and possibly somebody, quite rightly as people can have their own opinions, maybe thinking that “I could do the job better” y’know, but I don’t think it was a race thing (lines 454 - 460).

6.9 Jay’s profile

Jay identifies himself as a Chinese - American. He was born and raised in a Chinese - American family that has lived in the USA for several generations. His father was born in Hong Kong and emigrated to the USA whereas his mother was born in the USA. Both sets of grandparents emigrated to the USA and lived in the same neighbourhood.

His first language was Mandarin, which he learned from a very young age. However Jay’s mother is not fluent in Mandarin, so when he started school his parents made a conscious decision to instead use English at home instead. Consequently Jay considers himself a NES because English became his first language and he was born in the USA. His father and grandparents speak several different Chinese dialects, and his parents speak English to each other as well as to Jay and his brother.

Jay worked as an unqualified English language teacher for several years and, at the time of this study, had recently moved to international teacher recruitment for the same educational institution.
His restoried narrative does not have any specific events that feature a role identity performance but instead he presents a detailed reflection on his own identity and his views on being a VEM-NEST.

6.9.1 Emphasising American identity

Jay does not consider his ethnic identity as having had any major influence on who he is. However in China his ethnicity was made visible through questions about his background, but it did not overtly affect the way his VEM-NEST performance was accepted.

I think people are usually curious at first as to “Oh this guy has a Chinese looking face but his English sound like the English that I hear in Hollywood movies (cause I'm Californian) but he can't speak Chinese.” I never really looked at it that way, no one has ever brought it up before – “Oh, here’s a Chinese looking guy, he speaks native English, maybe I can do that too.” So for me I just see it as a launching point for a conversation, people are confused but as soon as I say ABC (American Born Chinese) they’re like “Ahh.” I think being in Shanghai, because it’s such a cosmopolitan city, maybe people are thrown off at first but once they realise what's going on it's not such a big surprise, they’re like “Oh, OK.” With students, I don’t know that there was there was a very big issue. I think it was just very matter of fact – “Oh, he’s Chinese American, his English seems to be alright.” I think the next question usually is “Oh there’s a large Chinese population in San Francisco right?” and there is. There are a lot of people from Hong Kong there’s lots of Cantonese spoken (lines 044 - 058).

Jay did not consider questions about his identity as a challenge but rather saw these encounters as opportunities to engage with others. In these instances, explaining he was an “ABC” immediately cleared up any confusion. The term “ABC”, and its British and Canadian equivalents, “BBC” and “CBC” respectively, were in reference to individuals of Chinese descent who were born outside of China, and who may or may not speak Mandarin. At the time of this study, Jay was working in Shanghai which he described as a “cosmopolitan city”, which implied that there were many foreigners in the city itself. From this background, it is implied that people meeting Jay for the first time would not be too surprised because the likelihood of meeting someone like him (e.g. An “ABC”) would be high in Shanghai. Thus being categorised as an “ABC” by a sympathetic audience was how he was able to perform his VEM-NEST role identity in China.

6.9.2 Not emphasising own racial identity

Jay’s VEM-NEST performance was not overly affected by the way others perceived his ethnic identity because he himself does not place a lot of weight on his Chinese ethnicity.
In a sense, he felt that he could choose the extent to which he would allow his ethnicity to define his identity.

There are probably a number of reasons why a defining moment doesn’t immediately leap out. One reason may be that while I value my roots, race and ethnicity have never played an enormous role in my identity. Rather, cultural heritage and values has more significance in shaping my character. I obviously recognise my ethnic difference, but perhaps this difference plays a more minor role in my identity (lines 132 - 137).

Jay considered his Chinese "cultural heritage" to be what influenced his VEM-NEST identity and subsequently he was not greatly affected when others asked about his background. He described his Chinese cultural heritage in terms of values his family have passed down which is based on a Western/Asian view but he does not discuss this distinction at great length.

So I guess Western society is a bit more individualistic whereas Asian societies tend to be more communal. So I guess that balance, I’m maybe more aware of that than some of my purely Western counterparts (lines 14 - 17).

This Western/Asian binary was used to perform his VEM-NEST identity differently to his non-Chinese NEST colleagues, as illustrated in the brief example:

The best way is to contrast that with the interactions of other pure American or pure Brits, and yes, I notice there is a little difference in the way that I interact with local staff and students and the way that they interact. People, Chinese folks here, are a little bit more indirect, so they’re going to work very hard to protect or save face. I think maybe I’m a little bit more aware of that so I try not to push people for an answer, for a solution but maybe go for it in maybe a little bit more of an indirect way. I think that you talk to them, it’s not necessarily “There’s a problem, we need to deal with it directly.” It’s more “We have this problem, what do you think we can do?” (lines 061 - 070).

Jay’s particular way of defining his Chinese identity affected the way he performed his VEM-NEST role identity. As a Chinese - American Jay felt he was more aware of the concept of face and used this knowledge in an attempt to communicate more effectively with the Chinese staff and students. He felt he was more aware of how Chinese culture operates, and approached encounters, particularly disagreements, differently to his non-Chinese colleagues.

Despite placing little emphasis on his ethnic identity, Jay is aware of NEST racial role norms that regulate the way VEM-NESTs are perceived. However he himself contributed towards the development of NEST role norms through his opinion that American and
British varieties of English are the defining feature of NESTs. Jay is rather pragmatic in his view of language varieties because in his new role as an international teacher recruiter in China he is bound by visa restrictions on what countries his school is able to recruit from.

Interestingly, his school recruits internally, and allowed VEM-NNESTs to teach. Jay gave the example of several Filipino teachers who were able to change positions within the school. The fact that there were a mix of nationalities and ethnicities within this school helped explain why Jay did not experience as much discrimination as other VEM-NESTs.

I guess that’s, in terms of nationality and ethnicity, you have Chinese national, ABC, the Filipino, someone of Mexican descent. The teaching staff are also a similar mix. It’s quite a multicultural staff, teachers are sort of split half and half, half international and half local, and in terms of our international staff we have a good mix of all different ethnicities and races (lines 107 - 111).

In his context, Jay goes on to explain that the Chinese government has visa restrictions in place on what countries they can recruit from, but the Filipino teacher was offered work because she was already in the country. She would not have been recruited if she had been in the Philippines. This detail showed the willingness of Jay’s school to hire VEM-NESTs and NNEST.

His view of how race and ethnicity affects individuals is, in some ways, contradictory. On one hand, Jay acknowledged that while he has not personally experienced racism, he was aware that it existed in TESOL, and felt that once students were taught by someone who did not fit their idea of a NEST, their perceptions could change.

Well I guess from my point of view, for the industry absolutely there is a hierarchy. As you were saying, you had difficulty getting hired at some places, and I guess there are some companies that want blue eyes, blond hair, white face, and “This is what an English speaker is supposed to look like.” I think some students also have that mentality as well, but I think once they take a couple of classes and realise they’re learning things from someone who doesn’t fit their picture of what an English teacher is supposed to look like, the barriers start to break down a little bit (lines 144-151).

In contrast Jay felt that the management at his school did not necessarily judge their staff members according to race. The teaching and administrative staff were a mix of foreign and local staff members from different nationalities and ethnicities. Within this group Jay felt that as a VEM-NEST he was seen on equal terms, because he felt that race was not a determining factor in how individuals, like himself, were perceived.
I think I’m seen on equal terms by the school management. I think so because ______ works really hard to have both international and local people in management positions. So when I was a senior teacher I also had a local Shanghainese lady as my co-senior teacher. I think there is a culture of equality. People don’t really distinguish along ethnic or racial lines (112-118).

Jay perceived that race becomes an influencing factor in different contexts. With regards to NESTs, he felt that race is made a prominent factor by the students and their parents, whereas among the staff at his school it is really an issue. Underlying his perception is his notion that individuals can choose when and how race affects them and the way they perceive others.

6.10 Andrés’ profile

Andrés identifies himself as a Mexican - American and is the only member of his immediate family that does not speak Spanish fluently. He himself is unsure how this came about, although he felt it was not due to a lack of effort on his part, because he did study it formally at school. However, Andrés’ lack of Spanish ability does not affect the way he views his Mexican identity. He studied Mandarin at university and was able to use the language proficiently, but nowadays his language level is not as high as before.

He first taught English briefly in South Korea and then for several years in China, where he was currently working at the time of this study. His appearance as an ethnic minority caused some confusion in South Korea but he was assumed to be a foreigner. In China he was often mistaken for an “ABC” - American Born Chinese. In both contexts Andrés emphasised his American identity to explain his NES role identity, which allowed him to perform his VEM-NEST role identity.

The following sections present two key events that occurred in Andrés’ restoried narrative and an important meta-commentary of his reflections upon his experiences.

6.10.1 Background information

In his story Andrés did not explicitly state that he was a NES nor did he talk about this aspect of his identity in great detail. However, it was clear that he considered himself a NES because of his American background, an assertion he presented later in his story. The first three sections of this restoried narrative (“Background”, “Languages growing up”,

174
and “Studying Mandarin”), described his family and educational background, with a particular focus placed on discussing his lack of Spanish language ability, to contrast why he only spoke English. These three sections of his restoried narrative focused on explaining why Andrés did not speak Spanish as well as the rest of this family, who were fluent in the language. The following quote summarises his language situation:

I’m the youngest of 3 and my parents raised us speaking English. My entire family is actually fluent in Spanish, however, for some reason I am not. I’m not exactly sure why, still kind of have that, not argument, but growing up I was like “You never taught me Spanish.” It’s not that they didn’t, but I just wasn’t always exposed, growing up (lines 011 - 015).

It was not clear to Andrés how this situation came about, but he felt very little pressure from his immediate family to learn the language. In this regard, language did not feature significantly in the way Andrés defined his identity in general, and so his lack of Spanish proficiency and his high level of Chinese language ability were regarded more as tools.

On one hand, speaking Spanish fluently was a way for Andrés to perform his Mexican-American identity to members of his extended family, who singled him out for his lack of language ability.

I plan to become fluent one day, I tell myself I just have to wake that part of my brain up because I know it’s in me to understand and be able to speak the language. But until then, I’ll remain the butt of those jokes at a huge family gatherings (lines 081 - 084).

His family may have regarded him as a bit of an oddity, but Andrés does not see himself as “less Spanish” than other members of his family, because his Mexican heritage does not depend on his Spanish language ability. While he intends to develop his Spanish language skills in the future he reiterated that his parents did not have a problem with his limited language ability nor did he feel any pressure to learn Spanish for the sake of the family.

English would be regarded as his first language and, along a similar rationale, he does not view himself any more American than his family members because he speaks only English. Interestingly, Andrés was also aware that speaking primarily English was not a deliberate attempt by his parents to Americanise him, so that he could have an easier experience as an ethnic minority in the USA.

I’m not sure if they did that on purpose, I remember your story, your parents wanted you to be identified and maybe like not have or be given a name that identifies them with their culture their
background. They want to be more Americanised instead of having a name, like my sister’s husband “Neil”, has took a very standardised name whereas like other friends like “Sarog” would have a very Indian name. Sometimes parents have told their kids and I’ve heard the stories that they wanted it to be that way - for school, for this, for that, for applications, for resumes - and I’m not sure if that’s what my parents wanted to do. I just know they aren’t disappointed as they obviously want me to know how to speak Spanish (056 - 065).

His awareness as an American ethnic minority was informed by the broader historical and political landscape that influenced the ways in which race is viewed in the USA. In the quote above he cited an example of personal contacts whose parents have Americanised their children’s names, so as their “culture” would not easily be inferred. This implied that being “culturally identified” could potentially be socially and economically disadvantageous in the USA.

6.10.2 Event A: Being asking about being an “ABC”

Andrés viewed being mistaken for a local Chinese resident as a positive experience because it placed him in a unique position to interact with other people. Andrés may be more aware of how his Mexican-American identity would be perceived differently in America, but this awareness changed from defensive to curious when he was mistaken for someone of Chinese descent. His curiosity informed the way he performed his VEM-NEST role identity in Asian contexts.

Living in China further confirmed that many people thought I was some mix of Chinese or had an East Asian background. I would always explain to cab drivers or locals I randomly had conversations with that I was Mexican-American and that neither of my parents are Asian. It never bothered me and it still doesn’t. Sometimes people I meet know right away that I am Latino, other times they think I am a mix or have an Asian background (lines 114 - 119).

He first became aware of his VEM-NEST identity when working in China and viewed the questions about his identity as people being curious rather than a challenge.

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<tr>
<th>Story elements</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>It wasn’t until I taught in China that I was aware of my visible ethnic minority status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>All of the Chinese staff members were very curious to know my background and when they would randomly find out I knew how to speak Mandarin, it was assumed I was an “ABC” – American Born Chinese.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I was asked and talked about and I knew exactly what they were saying – nothing offensive and I’ve never taken offence, I was just interested in the fact that they were so curious.

And then the questions began:

“So is your mum or dad Chinese?”

“What about your grandparents – where are they from?”

“Did you leave China and grow up in America?”

With the students, being so young, they speak Mandarin to any teacher. They are too young to distinguish what I am and then decide whether to talk to me in what little English they know or nothing at all.

They will ask where I’m from and I tell them America – so from that point, they just assume I know English and there isn’t any further questioning from my students. However, the Chinese staff may question a bit further just to find out where my roots are from and the, “Ohhh” light bulb will turn on.

Table 6.32: Event A in Andrés’ story

Becoming aware of his VEM-NEST status was approached with a sense of curiosity on Andrés’s part. He was aware that in certain situations he could potentially pass as ethnically Chinese yet it was when he was working as a NEST, that his ethnicity became “visible”, prompting questions about his ethnic identity. In an ELT context, where he is placed in a NEST role, he viewed questions about his ethnic identity as encompassing the same curiosity as when he was questioned outside of the classroom. Consequently, Andrés did not take any offence because he did not view this line of questioning as a challenge to this identity.

During Event A, Andrés intentionally used Mandarin Chinese to explain his American status in order to clarify his VEM-NEST role identity in specific situations. The use of Mandarin Chinese is not a reflection of his identity, but a tool he used first to find out what others thought about him and then to explain his VEM-NEST identity. Interestingly, he uses Mandarin Chinese to foreground his American identity. His young students expected a white NEST teacher and were not sure who Andrés was because he did not conform to the white racial role norms set out for this role. Andrés chose to respond in
Mandarin instead of English, in effect potentially increasing their confusion because he sounded what he looked like. However, explaining that he was American allowed him to meet the linguistic NEST role norm, resulting in being accepted by his students. Andrés’ particular VEM-NEST role identity performance made the people he met reconsider their expectations of a NEST. The questions that arose and the answers he provided are spaces in which NEST role identities are challenged and the possibility of a VEM-NEST role identity is introduced.

Outside of Event A speaking Chinese marked Andrés out as a foreigner, particularly with people he met on the street:

I can get around and say what I need to for the most part. I even get mistaken, like on the subway or the elevator, they’ll ask me questions, they just assume, because of my hair, my features, and I can communicate with them, I know what’s happening but they’ll realise “Oh he’s not” and they’ll have a little red flag that gets them to be like “Oh sorry” but they can talk to me and I’ll talk back, but then they’ll hear my accent and they’re like “Oh, wait he’s responding to me and he’s part of this conversation but he’s not a native!” (lines 134 - 140)

Andrés was not performing as a VEM-NEST because he was not in an EFL context, but this was an example of how he continued to view being initially mistaken for a person of Chinese descent, as an opportunity to speak Mandarin Chinese. He believed their reactions were out of curiosity, and he did not see any negative intentions in their line of questioning.

In China, Andrés played a more active role in establishing his identity. Mandarin Chinese was yet a different tool he used for communication in which he spent considerable time and effort to achieve a high level of proficiency. Unlike other participants, Andrés used the local language to establish himself as a foreigner and to explain his VEM-NEST role identity by telling others he was an American. Attempting to engage with local people in Mandarin sometimes marked him out as a foreigner, but other times it did not. Regardless, Andrés’ intention was not to blend in as a local but rather to communicate with them.

This view was in contrast to his experiences in South Korea. Andrés did not speak any Korean and thus did not have the use of language tools to explain who he was. Rather he
relied on the local Korean teaching staff to speak on his behalf. In these instances, his American identity was emphasised. Once his students accepted him on the basis of his American identity Andrés was then given the opportunity to perform as a VEM-NEST by challenging mono-racial views of Americans.

In South Korea, Andrés was aware that he was not easily regarded as “properly foreign” because he was not white. He discussed the make up of the foreign staff room during his brief time in Korea in which he made the following observations:

Mainly white people, that’s what the foreign would be. You know so if we went to a foreign bar, it would be a lot of whites, not a lot of African Americans. I was the only Hispanic American I saw while I was over there (lines 259-262).

Andrés had conflicting yet reconciled views of knowing that he was not regarded as properly foreign, because of his ethnic identity, yet is fine with being mistaken for a Chinese person.

6.10.3 Event B: Being introduced to parents

Part of Andrés’ VEM-NEST performance was to first observe the situation around him by listening in to the conversations as a way of understanding how he is being perceived. Through this practice he learned to expect certain reactions to his VEM-NEST role identity.

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<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>All of the parents when I took over for the teacher that finished his contract and was leaving, they would all come into the classroom after I’d finished teaching the kids, and we had a quick intro, say goodbye to the old teacher, say hello to me and there was a native Chinese person there to translate everything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERI</td>
<td>They all thought –well not all of them, but, I understood what was happening. I could understand the conversation from the native Chinese, all the parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>They were “I know he looks very…He looks like he might be from Shanghai or China, but he’s of a Mexican background”, and the majority of them were “Oh yes I can see,” just in general.</td>
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This event took place during the first day of class, in which Andrés was introduced as the new teacher. This particular setting has a high level of ambiguity caused by the change of teachers. Naturally the students, and their parents would have had a number of questions. When starting a new class or meeting people for the first time, he used his Mandarin Chinese ability indirectly to observe how he was perceived and, in doing so, learned to expect to be mistaken for a local. He did not see this as a challenge to his identity but rather a curious reaction to his appearance. Once he had assessed the situation he then made the conscious effort to establish his VEM-NEST role identity through emphasising his American background. Doing this demonstrated that he met the linguistic NEST role norms which then gave him opportunities to perform as a VEM-NEST more easily.

During this encounter, he took a more passive position because he chose not to speak Mandarin. Andrés did not explain why, although it can be inferred that because he was being introduced as “the Mexican-American NEST” he did not want to create confusion by speaking Mandarin during this first meeting.

### 6.10.4 VEM-NESTs and lack of multicultural awareness

Andrés contrasted the Korean and Chinese contexts, because they had an affect on the way his VEM-NEST performance was perceived. In Korea, he highlighted the lack of multicultural awareness in his students, which was due to several factors that he observed in the following quotes:

> We never saw any other foreign people, and if we did we wanted to become friends with them, you know “Oh cool, where are you from?” You know it was a great time if we found a restaurant
with an English menu. Everything was so Korean, whereas you know in Seoul you see a lot of people. It’s a huge capital, and many restaurants were there, but we got excited when we saw like a Starbucks or anything. The foreign population was very low, and whenever we saw someone we’d try and reach out to them and try and figure out their story, where did they live, because there’s like 10 of us (lines 242 - 250).

They didn’t even have the channels to watch, it was all Korea, Korea, Korea. Korea’s number 1! Any music was Korean, like K-pop, it was all tunnel vision for them (lines 437 - 439).

Being a small Korean city there were not many foreigners present which made the group of foreign teachers a sort of novelty to the local population.

It can be inferred that his English language fluency played a similar role as a tool rather than a definitive aspect of identity. He saw himself as a NES firstly because he is American and secondly because English is his first language. He used this distinction when performing as a VEM-NEST in Korea and in China. In Korea he was not aware he was a VEM-NEST and it may be from the fact that he was not easily mistaken for a Korean teacher. However in China, he became more aware that his ethnicity influenced the way his young students and their parents perceived him. In both contexts Andrés’ VEM-NEST identity did not conform to the NEST role norms, and his performance needed explaining. Therefore, he reiterated that he was American, which was the most acceptable explanation in specific situations.

6.11 Conclusion

In this chapter the individual findings from the analysis of the restoried narratives of each of the nine participants were presented. A profile summary was presented at the start of each section by way of introducing the reader to the participant before going into the findings of their restoried narratives. The findings were organised by the key events that occurred with a discussion on the role identity performances of the participant and what they thought of their performance.

The next chapter brings together the commonalities found across the analysis of the nine participants and presents a discussion on the significance of the findings.
Chapter Seven: Findings and Discussion

7.1 Overview of chapter

In this chapter I discuss how the findings of the second analytical stage provide a more nuanced definition of the NEST label through the way the participants negotiated this role identity using the NS/NNS binary distinction. I discuss this in light of the discussions presented in Chapters Two and Three. In section 7.2 – 7.4 I discuss the events that were common across the findings of the restoried narratives. Then, in section 7.3, I discuss the particular experiences of black Americans because their encounters with racism were more extreme in comparison to the other participants. Finally, section 7.5 addresses the last research question by discussing how the participants understand VEM-NEST as a role identity.

7.2 Direct and indirect challenges to participants' claimed NES identity

The most common VEM-NEST-related event that occurred was the act of challenging the participants’ claimed NEST identity by other people in specific contexts. These challenges took different forms, which I categorised as direct and indirect. Building upon Butler’s notion of performativity of gender (1999), I used her theory to make sense of the ways VEM-NESTs performed their racialised “native-speaker” identities. The participants exist in a NS/NNS binary, and they performed their identities in ways that enabled them to be recognised as “native-speaker” yet pushed the boundaries of what would be considered “normal native-speakers”. The participants’ responses are what Butler would have considered examples of how their performed role identities subverted the white NEST role norm.

The next section summarises the events that formed direct and indirect challenges to the participants’ NEST identity, and the way the participants performed their role identities during these events.

7.2.1 Direct challenges

Direct challenges refer to more overt and explicit forms of questioning and/or action. Suri, Peter, Li and Darcia’s examples had clear examples of events that centred on
responding to direct challenges. Suri’s example was the most straightforward in which the hotel manager simply asked her, in Spanish, "*Hablas como un nativo? / Are you a native speaker?*" This line of questioning, while direct in nature, was rare among the participants' experiences which indicated that the forthrightness of this question may be considered invasive, or perhaps rude.

Actions can be regarded as equally direct. Some participants were rejected from English language teaching positions because their racial and ethnic identities did not match the employers' expectations of NESTs as white. In Suri, Peter and Li's examples, their job applications were rejected because of this expectation in that they were assumed to be NNEST because they are not white.

In Suri and Peter’s examples they were able to discuss the nature of their rejections with their potential employers. Suri was employed via the British Council who were involved in the screening process for new English language teacher positions. In her example, it seemed that they were acting in her best interests by discouraging her from applying for a post:

> I did apply for the British Council in South Korea and the director phoned me back and said, “This is just unofficial but we’d love to have you but I think you’d have big problems here not being white.”

The direct action taken by the British Council was well intended on Suri’s behalf, but their unwillingness to put Suri forward for the post served to reinforce the white NEST norms that regulated who could work as a NEST in South Korea.

Peter was initially rejected from a permanent ELT position because he was not white. In his situation, Peter was already working at the school on a temporary contract, and could have been considered as a “real” NEST by his students. However, Peter’s employer felt that the students, in general, would not be able to accept Peter as properly “English”, as described in the following quote:

> On first broaching the subject of a more permanent arrangement whereby I would have a contract with fixed hours, holiday pay and other basic employment rights, I was told by my employer - an Asian man with whom I go back many years and who I would actually regard as a friend - he was unsure about taking someone on permanently who would be perceived by certain groups of
people - Arabs, Chinese, Iranian - according to him, as not truly English. He even joked - and I joined in his laughter - that these people would rather be taught “by that drunkard down the road as long as he was white!” I paraphrase here, but not too much!

The direct action taken by Peter’s employer was based on the view that particular nationalities would not accept Peter as a “real” English person. His employer’s decision may have been well intended, but nonetheless it reinforced the view that “real” English people and "real" NESTs are racially white. What makes this encounter more unique among the four participants was that Peter’s employer was also Asian. As an Asian who ran an English language school he would have been aware of the students’ racial assumptions of white people as NEST, yet was initially unwilling to hire Peter. However, Peter’s employer eventually did hire him on a permanent basis, though it was unclear what made his employer change his mind.

The events in Li and Darcia’s restored narratives are further examples of direct action taken to challenge their NEST identity. However, unlike Suri and Peter they did not have the opportunity to discuss the decision with their employers, and were left to deal with the aftermath. In Li’s example, she and her white partner applied to the same school in China but he was the only one offered a position.

I asked him, and it was because they actually had all their foreign teachers pictures taken, and they’re all portrait size and they put it at the door so the parent of little kids can see that it’s actually foreigners teaching their kids English. There’s not one Asian face up there.

Li had no recourse to discuss her application with her potential employers, and had to ask her partner to clarify why she was not hired. This description of the use of photographs to advertise “foreign teachers” reinforced Li’s view that Asians, like her, look too much like a local person to be considered a “real NEST”.

Darcia’s restored narrative described an event where she worked as a substitute teacher at a school for a day. In her situation, the school manager directly challenged her NEST identity by paying her less than the white teacher whose position Darcia was covering.

...she [the school manager] told me later how “Some of the parents would be upset if you’re not a white person, maybe I would be paying you less and I’d still be charging them the same amount of money.” She really didn’t say that. She was just “I’m very sorry but some of the parents, they maybe think I’m not being fair.” She didn’t really know the words to use. That’s what she said.
Darcia’s rendering of the school manager’s explanation demonstrated that she understood the implied message. Later in her story Darcia attempted to engage with the school manager’s decision through sending an email message, but did not receive a reply, or an explanation for why she was paid less. For both Li and Darcia they were left to manage the outcomes of the direct challenges to their NEST identities.

7.2.2 Indirect challenges

The most common form of challenge was to indirectly inquire about one’s NEST identity. Questions were usually worded as "Where are you from?" to which answers such as "Canada / America / UK" were often followed by further questions. Out of the nine participants, at least six experienced this line of questioning. Common to all six restoried narratives was that indirect questioning occurred when VEM-NESTs were already employed. The indirect challenges usually occurred during the first encounter with the participant, such as at the start of a new of class. During these initial encounters, the white NEST role norms surfaced through the line of questioning.

The surfacing of racial role norms are not only reflected in direct and indirect questions but also in the different answers given by VEM-NESTs. Consider the following replies to the “Where are you from?” question:

Suri: ...so I’d just say I’m Indian and I’d let them work for it a bit y’know to find out like “Oh you don’t speak English like an Indian!” “No, no I don’t, no.” “Hmmm?”

Li: Many times in South Korea I find that admitting I was Chinese was much easier than convincing children that I was Canadian. Questions stopped and an expression of understanding would don on their faces.

Patricia: ... sometimes I would get “Oh, your English is very good!” – well, I am an American, we do speak English you know! So there would be that kind of thing.

Darcia: I initially thought that I wouldn’t be seen on the same sort of level, but later for the kids a foreigner is a foreigner, and I think for any child anywhere, they don’t really have as many preconceived notions as adults do.

Jay: So for me I just see it as a launching point for a conversation, people are confused but as soon as I say ABC (American Born Chinese) they’re like “Ahh.”

Andrés: They will ask where I’m from and I tell them America – so from that point, they just assume I know English and there isn’t any further questioning from my students. However, the Chinese staff may question a bit further just to find out where my roots are from and the, “Oh” light bulb will turn on.
These replies reflected the participants’ awareness of how their racial and ethnic identities do not fit the expected white racial norm for NEST role identities. They also reflect different strategies used to negotiate opportunities for the participants to perform their role identities. Suri’s response was the most vague because she deliberately did not clarify her NES role identity by conforming to the expected US/UK identity markers but rather left her students in a state of confusion. This gave her the opportunity to show her students that an Indian, like her, could speak English like a native speaker. In Li’s context she felt was unable to convince her students of her Canadian identity, and instead chose to emphasise her Chinese identity in order to become accepted as an English language teacher. It was not clear if she was regarded as a NEST, but in her context her students easily accepted Li was Chinese because she looked Chinese.

Similar to Li’s example, Patricia was often mistaken for being African rather than being African-American. However, she chose to emphasise her American identity because it is a formative aspect of her identity. Unlike Li, who has a strong cultural and historical connection to her Chinese ethnicity, Patricia does not have any link to her African ancestry other than being Black, which she admitted in her restored narrative. Moreover, by emphasising her American identity Patricia was able to meet the NES role norms which allowed her to perform as a VEM-NEST in her teaching context.

Darcia’s answer was one of categorising herself as a foreigner which, in her context, was a different way of being associated with NEST role identity. In her context she observed that NEST role identities could be viewed in terms of how different the individual looked from the local population. Living in South Korea meant that anyone who did not have Asian features could be considered “foreign”. Added to this perception was the young age of her students whom Darcia observed as being less likely to view her negatively than adults. Thus, being considered a “black foreigner” was a way of associating herself with NESTs.

The last two examples focused on using their American nationalities as a way of gaining acceptance as a NES. Out of the nine participants, Jay and Andrés were not faced with overt challenges to their NES identity which helped contribute to their overall positive
outlook on their VEM-NEST role identity. They interpreted indirect questions as people being genuinely curious about their backgrounds. While they were aware of the subtext, they personally felt that for them they did not need to prove their NES identity. For Jay and Andrés, the “Where are you from?” question was interpreted as “getting to know you” type of questions rather than a challenge to their NES identity. However benign the questions, the subtext remained because the questions were asked of VEM-NESTs in order to clarify their identities because they were perceived not to fit NEST role norms.

In other instances the “Where are you from” question was implied in other types of identity questions. In Peter’s example, the focus was on his qualifications:

At the end of the session however, the Chinese man almost seamlessly and without me realising the inference or subtext at first, asked what formal qualifications I had for doing this job. I answered his questions confidently and dispassionately.

Peter would not have thought twice about being asked about his qualifications had he not found out that the was the only teacher questioned by this particular student. Peter realised that he did not fit this student’s expectation of a NEST because, unlike the rest of the teaching staff, he is not white. The question regarding qualifications was a way of trying to find out what other ways Peter fit NEST role norms.

7.3 Negative stereotypical perceptions of Black Americans

Experiencing racism was a common occurrence in the majority of VEM-NEST related events. Building upon a CRT perspective, the racism experienced by VEM-NESTs could be considered normal aspect of TESOL because it is tolerated. However, the more overt examples of racist situations were experienced by the black-American participants. The severity of the racism they encountered was not coincidental, but could be considered an outcome of the complex factors that influence the way black racial identities are perceived across the world. While it is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the different historical, political and social factors that affect how black races are perceived, it is important to examine how the black Americans in this study managed racist encounters because their restored narratives are indicative of the wider perceptions of race in TESOL.
7.3.1 Self-awareness of black racial identity and previous experiences with racism

Considering the historical context that has influenced how race is viewed in America, the black-American participants were already aware that their black identity could be perceived negatively in their respective EFL contexts. The participants’ conceptualisation of their VEM-NEST role identity was influenced by how they viewed their racial identities and their awareness of how these identities may have been perceived in their teaching contexts. Patricia and Darcia’s restoried narratives have several examples of how their awareness of their racial identity informed their understanding of the racism they experienced. For Darcia, her awareness informed her sense of expectation going into a new situation, providing a kind of buffer zone that was an act of self-preservation.

It’s like with any situation where you might like hope for the best but expect the worst, and when the worst doesn’t happen you start eliminating those thoughts from your mind. “Oh it’s ok, I shouldn’t expect the worst”, but then if it happens you’re “Oh, I knew this would happen.” It confirms in your mind that it does exist, it can happen, but I also thought that’s not everybody, it’s not the majority, it’s just her as a person, she wasn’t very organised. If she’d looked at my resume in the first place she wouldn’t have had that problem. She just would have been “I don’t think we can use you”.

In this specific event, Darcia was paid less for her work as a substitute teacher because she was black. There is a certain level of resignation in her reflections because it appeared that this was not the first time she experienced racism in a workplace context. Darcia expects to face racism at some point in the future and while she “hopes for the best” she is prepared if and when it occurs.

In a similar vein, Patricia reflected on how she recognised the racist undertones behind decisions to exclude her from certain activities.

And you kinda know. School trips, picnics, just things like that you know? Dinners - personal dinners with the principal. I was never a part of that. I did mention it to her, and there was always a reason some “logical explanation” that they tried to make for it. But when you’ve experienced racism your whole life, you pretty much know when people act in a kind of why that’s so blatant. They don’t make it too obvious, but you already know. I just kind of ignored it really.

Patricia understood that she was considered inferior to her white colleague who, in contrast, was treated well. The awareness that she developed out of her past experiences with racism enabled her to recognise “logical explanations” made by others as attempts to rationalise their racist views. Being able analyse racist experiences was Patricia’s way of protecting herself in order to move forward.
7.3.2  \textit{Becoming better aware of one’s black racial identity}

For some of the other participants, they described intentionally learning how their racial and ethnic identities have the potential to be perceived negatively or positively. There are two instances in which the participants described learning how their racial identity may be perceived differently. Nora’s example was the most forthcoming on which she described learning this awareness directly from her parents.

Additionally, my parents were very open about the fact that my ethnicity could prove to be a barrier to achievement if I allowed it to be and as such, they enthusiastically encouraged and supported my learning throughout the education system. I guess, they made me aware of the “hoops” that I would need to jump through to be “successful” (i.e. it was a given that my sister and I would go to university although neither of our parents had).

Nora went on to describe how her parents felt that she, as a black individual, would need to work harder in order to be considered on the same level as a white individual when being considered for the same position. Moreover, in Nora’s example this view was also influenced by the notion of accent as a marker of class. From the perspective of Nora’s parents, being black British with a working class accent was even more detrimental to upward social mobility than “just” being black. While Nora herself was made aware of the possible negative associations with being black British, she placed more emphasis on changing her accent as a way of creating a more positive overall perception.

Marcus’s restoried narrative described his experience taking a college-level course in order to make sense of the racism he experienced in his EFL context. In his situation Marcus built upon his current awareness of how his black identity could be perceived by attending this course, and learned how the concept of micro-aggressions could be used as a tool to analyse his experiences. The new insights gained from this course gave Marcus the confidence to confront his employer about his past racist behaviour.

The final step in many ways is optional but perhaps very encouraging. It involves the notion of attempting to rescue the offender. The idea here is that the victim of a micro-aggression makes an attempt to educate his or her misinformed assailant about how the micro-aggression is discomforting. This step was one of the most important for me as it allowed me to take action as opposed to thinking about how I might have responded to my employer. Not too long ago, I actually sent him an email outlining why I felt many of the comments that he made were wrong. He apologised for his actions, and I felt vindicated.
Marcus, in confronting his employer, was not out for revenge but instead viewed the meeting as a way to educate this individual so that, in the future, his employer may become aware of his racial prejudices with the potential to changing his behaviour towards black minorities. This proactive stance enabled Marcus to not only address his past experiences with racism, but prepared him with constructive ways of dealing with racism should he encounter it in the future. Marcus has become more aware of the different ways he could perform his role identities in racist situations through the course he took.

### 7.3.3 The influence of black American stereotypes on perceptions of black VEM-NESTs

The black VEM-NESTs in this study experienced different types of racisms which, to an extent, reflect the way in which racism is embedded in society through negative perceptions based on black American stereotypes. These stereotypes, in part, influenced the way black American English language teachers were perceived. In some instances, the perpetrators of racism were not the local students or staff but the participants’ colleagues who were presumed also to be from Inner Circle countries. For example, the ability to speak "Standard English" was challenged in Patricia and Marcus’s restoried narratives. In Patricia’s example, she reflected on her level of English being questioned:

> So I feel like if maybe they encounter some people who don’t act like that, who aren’t a drug dealer or a rapper, that’s what I was told at another school that I worked at, that I speak like a rapper. I was told that the other teachers were complaining that I sounded like a rapper when I spoke. I was like “Oh, that’s a new one!” I don’t even know because I couldn’t even really tell you how a rapper sounds? I guess maybe she meant I speak with a type of slang or Ebonics or whatever, I don’t even know? That’s how, when I think of a rapper, that’s what I think of, but I don’t speak slang, I don’t speak Ebonics, or whatever you’d call it, I just speak regular typical American I guess. Usually when people speak to me on the phone they say they don’t even know what race I am when they’re talking to me.

The first part of this quote alludes to Patricia’s observations of stereotypical media representations of black Americans as drug dealers or rappers. She implies that because she is a black American, these perceptions may explained why her colleagues thought she “sounded like a rapper” instead of being judged as sounding “informal”. Moreover, Patricia was perplexed by her colleagues’ opinion because she herself was unsure of what she did to “sound like a rapper”. More pressing was the lack of explanation from her colleagues as to why they thought this way. Without further clarification Patricia did not have any recourse to take action, but instead was left to deal with their negative
perceptions. Furthermore, her colleagues may not have asked Patricia to change her spoken English because they assumed this was the way she naturally spoke, and therefore would be unable to change.

Marcus’s experiences also highlighted the way stereotypical views of black Americans are used. During Event B, Marcus was challenged on the nature of African American English (AAE):

At a Japanese Teppanyaki restaurant he suggested to a crowd of strangers that Ebonics was bad English despite my attempts to suggest otherwise. The crowd - they didn’t really care. One was a British girl and she asked him to say some things in African American English and he did and then she did.

Marcus’s employer publicly aired his negative evaluation of AAE which placed Marcus in the difficult position of defending his own views. However, in this situation Marcus was in the minority because from his perspective the rest of the audience agreed with the negative views of his employer. At no point was Marcus invited to engage further in the discussion, particularly during the exchange between his employer and the British girl who were speaking what they believed was AAE. In this situation there appears to be very little awareness of the complexities of African American English, and the differences between African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Black English (BE) and Ebonics (see Clark 2013). What was evident during this event was the negative connotations associated with AAE, usually characterised as “slang” or “lazy”, which marks its speaker as deviant and lacking in some way, inferior in status to those whom "Standard American English" is considered the norm (ibid p.34). In Marcus’ situation, attempts made by others to speak AAE was done to publicly reiterate their negative views of AAE, and by extension, positioned Marcus to an even in a lower status because of his support for African American English.

For Patricia and Marcus, they were both recipients of racist perceptions that were based on stereotypical views of black American identities. In their respective contexts they were regarded as representatives of black people, yet, were not given opportunities to represent their racial identities on their own terms. Instead they were assumed to be complicit in perpetuating black American stereotypes. Patricia was regarded as sounding
like a “rapper”, and Marcus was looked down upon for his views of AAE. They were not invited to engage with those making negative perceptions, but were placed in a passive position, which made it more difficult for them to find opportunities to defend against the negative stereotypes.

The other black participants were also aware of how they may be negatively viewed based on black American stereotypes in the media. This awareness was revealed through their reflections their experiences and through the way they went about preparing for new situations. Some of the participants were aware that black people may be perceived as lazy, or unprofessional, and therefore adapted the way they performed their role identities to present a positive view of black people. Darcia’s example in section 6.6.4 described in detail her attempts to look well presented and professional because she has learned that as a black individual, she would not be regarded on the same level as her white colleague. Similarly Patricia felt compelled to be “an ambassador for all black people” as a way of challenging negative stereotypes. While she does not go into detail on what she planned to do, it may be surmised that Patricia’s VEM-NEST role identity performance may be similar to Darcia’s in which their performances sought to convey a sense of professionalism.

Marcus shared their goal of positively representing black Americans, but his emphasis was more on managing racist encounters in order to make the perpetrator aware of their negative beliefs. Using his knowledge of micro-aggressions he sought to turn racist encounters into educational events that could potentially benefit everyone involved. For Marcus, being able to confront his former employer about racism was a form of positive representation because he was able to position himself as an equal. From this position Marcus was able to address his former employer about his racist views with the hope that with this new awareness, his former employer would be less likely to negatively view other black individuals.

7.3.4 Different kinds of racism

Kubota and Lin (2009) argue that a better understanding of what racism is needed by examining the various forms racism can take. My study goes to some extent to illustrate
the different types of racism that occurred in the experiences of VEM-NESGs. The examples in sections 7.2 and 7.3 presented different kinds of racism. The acts of direct and indirect questioning are affected by racialised discourses (ibid: 6) that influence the way racism manifests themselves. In examples presented in section 7.2, the racist discourses that privileged white NSs is indicative of the institutional or structural racism (ibid) is present in the way VEM-NESGs were regularly questioned about their background. Moreover institution or structural racism is also present in unquestioning acceptance of white NSs.

Section 7.3 presents examples of how the hegemony of whiteness (McIntyre 1997) is present in the way it constructs norms with regards to what constitutes legitimate linguistic and cultural knowledge. This becomes problematic if individuals are perceived as representatives of illegitimate forms of knowledge. For Patricia and Marcus they were assumed to “sound like rappers” or speak AAVE because not because they demonstrated this ability, but rather these traits were assumed they are black Americans. These assumptions carried negative implications on Patricia and Marcus’ capabilities as TESOL professionals because AAVE and “sounding like a rapper” is considered illegitimate forms of knowledge in their respective EFL contexts.

7.4 Perceptions of “culture” on racial and ethnic identities

In this study, “culture” was mostly understood in essentialist terms which, according to Holliday (2011:4), “presents peoples’ behaviours as entirely defined and constrained by the cultures they live so that the stereotype becomes the essence of who they are.” This view was applied to the cultures that the participants worked in as well as to the cultures they drew their identities from.

7.4.1 VEM-NESTs’ stereotypical views of “culture”

As discussed in Chapter Three, an essentialist view considers culture as homogeneous, closely associated with specific places (e.g. countries), languages and ethnicities (Holliday, Hyde and Kullman 2010) in which behaviour and opinions are assumed to be equally shared and held by all members. Some of the participants held essentialist views of the “cultures” they lived in which reduced individuals into representative stereotypes of the
Other. The following statements are a few examples of how some of the participants expressed essentialist views of Chinese or South Korean “culture”:

___ wasn’t a mean person, she was just abruptly honest, like most Chinese people are. You know – oh, you’re short / oh, you’re fat / oh, you’re dark. So they’ll just say whatever, so she wasn’t a mean person, she was just typically Chinese (Darcia).

China had impressed upon me the importance of appearance. I knew that Asians discriminated against other Asians when it came to language learning, I just didn’t realize that international corporations located in China did the exact same thing (Li, lines 238 - 241).

In Korea, you can find dozens of skin bleaching creams and lotions, and Korean women walk around with umbrellas in the sun and will cover from head to toe just so they don’t tan. They go through all this, and then they see, me - a woman with a deep dark brown complexion with waist length dreadlocks - and it’s baffling to them (Patricia, lines 017 - 117).

Especially, as you know, in here, in Asia, they’ll stare at you or not be so friendly. They’re just kind of like curious, that’s all it is (Andres, lines 486-488).

Statements such as "typically Chinese", "they", and "in Asia" are examples of Otherisation, which were indicative of the way culture was viewed as singular. In an essentialist view, variations of behaviour would be considered exceptions rather than part of a view that considers culture as complex, multiple and varied (Holliday 2011). In addition, Otherisation of Chinese and South Korean “culture” gives rise to an “us versus them” mentality in which the participants inadvertently compared an idealised view their “culture” with an imagined, demonised view of the Other (Holliday 2011).

In each of these statements, the participants’ descriptions of “culture” are examples of Otherization because Chinese “culture” or South Korean “culture” are portrayed negatively (e.g. “they’re like this”). In comparison, the participants had a stereotypical view of their own culture that portrayed their “culture” as being more progressive, modern and self-aware than the Other “culture”. Yet, despite critiquing aspects of their own culture in their restoried narratives, there remained a sense of cultural superiority conveyed in the way the participants reflected upon their experiences.

**7.4.2 Changing perceptions of VEM-NESTs in specific contexts**

Drawing attention to the experiences of VEM-NESTs revealed the ways in which the NS/NNS binary distinction is used as a reference for identity while simultaneously highlighting the inequitable norms that regulate identities within these labels. There is a
sense of contradiction where on one hand, the participants were able to expand the
NS/NNS to a limited extent, by introducing the concept of ethnic minorities as a viable
group of NES. The introduction of this concept allows for the expansion of NEST role
norms to include people of colour. There is some indication that the concept of NES as a
person of colour is becoming more commonplace in some contexts. Some participants
expressed that the presence of VEM-NESTs was not surprising in their particular contexts:

I have an older class actually at our school right now and it’s the highest level that they offer and
so these kids are middle school and are much older than they understand, their English is amazing.
I don’t even have to really get into America and explaining it because we can just talk about travel
and they’re like “Oh yeah, I was in New York, I went to a summer school class at NYU” or
something, so then they know about it. They’re exposed to it because Shanghai is that
international in its population. The ex-pat population is always growing and they just see more of
it, and on the news it’s present, and so I think because of this city itself they know about it and
they’re not surprised by it (Andrés, lines 482-490).

When I see a lot of high-schoolers, they don’t care; they’re not fazed by me. It’s more the really old
people or a little kid maybe, but I think that’s more and more the sentiment or the views are
changing on what an English teacher is or who they should be (Darcia, lines 420-423).

Our share of the market our parents are quite sophisticated so they care more about the
qualifications of the people rather than - I mean it depends. I’m sure there are some schools that
advertise to probably out in the countryside, someplace where the market isn’t as developed yet
just because people are ignorant, they don’t know, but I mean we’re here in a major Chinese city
and I think the market is much more sophisticated. That’s what we are. I mean we’re not far from
where the expo was, so you have all this classes where ideas are expressed and can come all sorts
of cross cultural change. They like the classes taught by non-white staff because they care about
the students and the students enjoy the class (Marcus, lines 230-240).

In these examples, the contextual factors contributed towards the way VEM-NESTs were
perceived. Firstly, all three examples took place in Shanghai which is one of the biggest
cities in China that has a large population of resident foreigners\(^3\) and a large number of
foreign tourists that visit annually. In Shanghai, the likelihood that local English language
learners would have encountered individuals from different racial backgrounds, NES of
colour and/or would have been taught by a VEM-NEST would be higher than in smaller
cities. Secondly, Andrés and Marcus’s quotes reference the economic class of most of
their students with the implication that they would be more accepting of VEM-NESTs.
Coming from a higher economic status these students would have had more
opportunities to travel and encounter people from different ethnicities. Furthermore it
could be surmised that these students would have had better access to more educational

\(^3\) see Bureau of Exit-Entry Administration Shanghai Municipal Public Security Bureau 2010 for population numbers
resources (e.g. private tutors, private classes) to support their English language learning. Lastly, Darcia makes an interesting observation that in her context her high school students were more receptive to her as a teacher, indicating that perhaps awareness of VEM-NESTs can be generational. These quotes are indicative of the larger contextual factors that need to be explored further in order to understand the level of influence this has on how racial identities are perceived.

On the other hand, the emphasis on NES identity is at the expense of reinforcing prevailing negative views of NNSs by devaluing English language speakers from countries that are not considered part of the Inner Circle. In challenging the current NS/NNS identity norms, the emphasis on NES identity is a “step backward” because it reinforces the hierarchy based on assumed qualities of particular identities. The NS/NNS binary distinction is the hierarchical system that VEM-NESTs find themselves in, and in order to be given value, they used the hierarchy to their advantage but at the expense of other groups, such as NNESTs/VEM-NNESTs. The difficulty the participants faced was that often emphasising their Inner Circle country affiliation was the only way they were given the opportunity to perform as a VEM-NEST role identity.

7.5 Visibility of race through conceptualisation of VEM-NEST role identity

This section focuses on addressing the third research question: How do the participants understand VEM-NEST as a role identity? In my conceptual framework, a role identity is a situation-specific identity that individuals perform in a specific context (Stryker 1980). The situation outlines the types of role identities available and/or appropriate for the situation. Individuals can choose a role identity as a way of categorising themselves into the structural roles available to them in a specific situation. Alternatively, other people in a situation may assign role identities. In both scenarios the individual may or may not agree with the role they have been assigned and may negotiate what and how their role identities may be performed.

In this study the participants’ racial and ethnic identities influenced how they were accepted as a NEST in their specific contexts. Their awareness of the challenges posed when taking on the NEST role identity informed the way they performed as a VEM-NEST.
In the participants’ specific contexts, the VEM-NEST role identity was relatively new and unknown type of role identity. I now turn to discussing the participants’ understanding of VEM-NEST as a role identity.

7.5.1  **VEM-NEST role identity to meet NEST role norms**

The participants learned that there were specific role norms that needed to be met before they were accepted as a NEST. As discussed in Chapter Two, the concept of the “native-speaker” is based on a specific definition used as a model for language learners to emulate. The participants learned that the NEST role identity was not a role that was easily ascribed to them and learned to develop different strategies to convince others of their NEST role identity. Some participants chose to emphasise their nationalities as a way of proving that they meet the NEST role norms.

I think the moment I say I’m not Chinese, I am from America, they understand and acknowledge I know and speak English fluently (Andrés).

I’m glad that I haven’t got a very broad black country accent, particularly in the job that I do as an English language teacher I think it’s good (Nora).

For many participants, being associated with an Inner Circle country either by birth or through immigration, is an advantage because they are aware that employers and students place greater value on NES. This is in line with Medgyes’ (1999) argument of how NES becomes the idealised English language teacher. In addition, some of the participants agree, to some extent, with the perception of “Standard English” as originating from Inner Circle countries, as in Li’s quote, because it was the most straightforward way of proving they meet the linguistic role norms required in their contexts to perform as a NEST. “Standard English” is also viewed as having a particular accent. Nora’s quote revealed the view that a British NES with a strong regional accent would not be well regarded. In her example, in order to be an English language teacher not having a regional “black country” accent was beneficial.

It may be argued that there exists a further grey area within the NS/NNS binary distinction that does not emphasis Inner Circle identities but rather considers the possibility of having Expanding Circle identities as NEST role norm alternatives. Li, and Suri’s restoried narratives are examples of how they deliberately used their respective
Chinese and Indian identities as ways to place value upon teachers who do not fit NEST identity expectations. Li’s response (see Table 6.14) was the most forthcoming because in both South Korea and China she chose to emphasise her Chinese ethnicity rather than her Canadian identity because, for her, it was a way of managing situations that would not accept her claim to being Canadian. Moreover, through her experiences, Li felt that being seen as Chinese was an asset over being considered Canadian because her students felt she became more approachable (see section 6.4.7). Through her experiences Li has learned to view her Chinese identity on equal terms as her Canadian identity when performing as a VEM-NEST because she was able to use her Chinese identity as a way of gaining acceptance without necessarily meeting NES role norms.

Suri was aware she needed to meet NEST role norms, but she also believed that is was important to be a good English language teacher as well.

So having said that, I think a lot of importance is based on being or having a teacher that is a native speaker whereas you’re forgetting that they also have to be good teachers. There’s a pedagogical side, you can probably learn a lot from a very good teacher who is not a native speaker. If they can say, y’know, I’m gonna go out or I’m going to go out – what difference does it make, y’know, in the long run. You’re not going to end up being a native speaker by being taught by a native speaker so, there is that side to it as well (Suri, lines 215-222).

Like other participants, Suri was aware of the value placed on NES in the contexts she worked in but emphasised one needed to be a good teacher as well. Her view of being a VEM-NEST as a role identity involved not only needing to meet NEST role norms but also being a good teacher.

In the participants’ specific contexts, the VEM-NEST role identity was relatively new and unknown type of role identity because it does not easily fit in the NS/NNS binary distinction. The participants are aware they are viewed as a kind of anomaly, or exceptional type of NES. They use this knowledge to inadvertently challenge the linguistic and racial role norms that restrict who can be considered as NEST. Using Butler’s notion of performativity (1999), the NS/NNS binary distinction can be considered as unstable and varied because individuals such as VEM-NEST have personal agency to challenge and expand the binary. The strategies the participants develop to meet NEST role norms illustrate that role norms are not deterministic because the performance of the role
identity can subvert the expectations and assumptions of who and how the role identity ought to “be”.

Role norms exist in a society that is structured, but this does not mean the structures, and the norms, are fixed. Norms exist to the extent that they are performed, insofar as people enact and re-enact them (Johnson and Meinholf 1997). The participants’ VEM-NEST performances are examples of how an individual can perform role identities in ways that challenge the boundaries of how the role is defined. VEM-NEST, as a role identity, broadens the cycle of reinforced meaning because their role performances are different. The challenge to the NEST role norm is small, yet decisive in the process of moving VEM-NESTs from being viewed as an exception to the NEST identity to a reality in their own right.

7.5.2 VEM-NEST as positive representation of one’s racial or ethnic group

The participants also viewed the VEM-NEST role identity as an opportunity to positively represent their racial and ethnic backgrounds to challenge racial stereotypes in their contexts. When attempting to perform a VEM-NEST role identity in specific situations, their awareness of the value placed on white NEST from Inner Circle countries enabled the participants them to develop strategies to place value on VEM-NESTs as a viable alternative to white NESTs. This is a different focus to emphasising one’s Inner Circle associations in that the participants attempted to place more value on their own racial and ethnic identities.

For example, some of the black participants deliberately adapted the way they presented themselves as a pre-emptive measure:

…I always make sure I dress nice. I’m not going to wear a suit or anything but just my clothes aren’t wrinkled, and I do wear jeans if I go to people’s homes, but it’s tasteful. Making the effort doesn’t bother me at all, cause it happens in the States all the time. It’s already a frame of mind, like a lot of minorities have. I’m sure that Hispanics, African Americans in the US, it already occurs, so it’s already something you have to deal with (Darcia, lines 315-322).

I feel like now I have to be an ambassador for all black people when I teach in other countries because I want them to come away from their experience of being taught by me (or having any sort of encounter with me) and say that they were wrong about what their initial impression of how black people was. I want to show them that there is beauty in ALL cultures and one should get to know a person before developing an opinion about them. I would hope that I can crush those
stereotypes and stamp out those preconceived and often misleading notions that they have about people of colour (Patricia, lines 126-134).

The notion of performative repetition (Butler 1993) argues that identity norms become “natural” when collectively individuals repeat identity performances over time. Darcia and Patricia’s actions are examples of repeating previous performances in order to bring about alternative, more positive identity norms of ‘black people’. Their quotes are different perspectives on creating positive representations of black people in their respective contexts. When gaining acceptance to perform as a VEM-NESTs, they took opportunities given to them to challenge negative stereotypes of black Americans. In Darcia’s example, her focus was on conveying a professional, well-presented figure of black Americans through the way she dressed because, in her view, ethnic minorities must make more of an effort in order to be viewed positively. On a similar level, Patricia reflected on her role of being "an ambassador for all black people" because she has already experienced racism due to negative assumptions of black people.

Suri’s situation is another example of how participants viewed the VEM-NEST role identity as an opportunity to positively represent their racial and ethnic backgrounds through alternative identity performances which, over time, could challenge “Indian” identity norms (Butler 1999). Suri’s response to indirect questions was an unspoken challenge to her students because it challenged stereotypes of Indian English speakers. She did not need to explain her identity in order to make a point. Furthermore she continued to answer “Where are you from?” type of questions with “I’m from India” despite currently carrying a British passport. Her rationale for doing so is summarised in her own words:

I want people to know that you can be Indian and be very educated and be very good at what you do, and that you don’t have to come out of the UK education system to get somewhere like this. So this has been sort of a battle for me that I want to make people more aware that developing countries also have very good universities and good schools and I can be a product, and in a small way I am a product of the Indian education system and they accept me as a good English teacher so, I think that’s a positive thing (Suri, lines 271-278).

Being a positive representative of her Indian background was important to Suri and she believed that she did not need to draw attention to her associations with Britain in order to be valued as an English language teacher of Indian descent.
7.6 Conclusion

This chapter drew together the findings from the analysis of the nine individual restored narratives and presented a summary answer to the three research questions. The most common events experienced by the participants were discussed, the first being the way participants were challenged through direct and indirect means. The practice of questioning NES identities of teachers who are not white is considered normal practice in TESOL. The second most common event was more overt forms of racism experienced by black Americans. The findings suggest that racism did not come as a surprise for the black participants because they possess heightened sense of self-awareness that informed the way they emotionally and practically prepared for the potential to be negatively perceived. The final, most common event was the way in which the participants viewed “culture” in an essentialised manner, inadvertently viewing their own “culture” as superior to the one in which they currently resided. This chapter closed with a discussion about the participants’ understanding of VEM-NEST as a role identity and how they were aware of needing to meet NES role norms and, once accepted, saw VEM-NEST role identity as an opportunity to positively represent their racial and ethnic identity groups.

The final chapter discusses the main conclusions drawn from my study. I then present the contributions of my study, and suggest areas for further development before drawing my thesis to a close with my final reflections.
Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Thesis conclusions

My study examined the experiences of VEM-NESTs as a way of problematising the NS/NNS binary distinction currently used to place value on professionals in TESOL through a narrative-based approach. This thesis addressed the following research questions:

RQ 1. What VEM-NEST related events occurred in the participants’ restoried narrative?

RQ 2. How did the participants perform their role identities during these events?

RQ 3. How do the participants understand VEM-NEST as a role identity?

The restoried narratives used in this study were analysed to identify how the participants performed specific identities in specific situations, and examined how they understood VEM-NEST as a role identity. The first stage of the analysis examined the individual restoried narratives and drew out key events that were closely related to VEM-NESTs as a role identity. The findings of the first stage were presented in Chapter Six. The second stage of the analysis was presented in Chapter Seven and examined events and role identity performances common across the nine restoried narratives.

The first and second research question was addressed in Chapter Six which presented VEM-NEST related events that were identified in the participants’ restoried narratives. From identifying these events I discussed how the participants performed their role identities within these events. In Chapter Seven I presented the findings of my analysis and addressed the final research question. First, the findings yielded two commonalities: the first was questioning the participants’ NEST identities through direct and indirect approaches and the second most common event was experiencing racism based on perceived racial stereotypes. Special attention was given to examining the common experiences of black American participants because their experiences, though more extreme that others, revealed the most insights into the way they performed their VEM-
NEST identities. The finding revealed that they possessed a heightened self-awareness of how their racial identities may be negatively perceived, which informed the way they managed their expectations going into a new event, particularly when they encountered racism. The final research question focused on how the participants understood VEM-NEST as a role identity. Findings revealed that they viewed VEM-NEST as a role identity through their awareness of needing to meet NEST role identity norms, and the way they felt the need to be positive representatives of their respective racial and ethnic minority groups.

Drawing on my conceptual framework and the research questions that have guided my thesis, I present the main conclusions drawn from this study in the following sections.

8.2 Alternatives to NS/NNS binary distinction is needed

The VEM-NEST label could be regarded as an attempt to create a more inclusive NEST category. There is some advantage to this because a more inclusive NEST category poses a challenge to the white racial norm easily attributed to NESTs. However, despite introducing the concept of racial and ethnic minorities as NESTs, what is unclear is whether VEM-NESTs are considered on equal terms as white NESTs, or if they considered yet another level within the hierarchy.

Attempting to include VEM-NESTs as valid NESTs would only serve to reinforce the NS/NNS binary distinction. I recognise that my study may be interpreted in this way, but it was not my intention. Instead, I present the VEM-NEST label as a move towards a more radical conceptualisation of how teachers are valued that is not based on the NS/NNS labels. The following sections discuss different ways of exploring this new conceptual territory.

8.2.1 Making the invisibility of race visible

I return to defining VEM-NEST identities in reference to the NS/NNS binary distinction because of the potential to foreground how racial and ethnic identities are valued. It is also the current way in which TESOL professionals are valued and it would be prudent to use the binary distinction as a starting point.
If VEM-NESTs are considered an additional hierarchical level, where would this group be placed? If racial identities are foregrounded, I suggest that the NS/NNS binary distinction could be considered in the following manner:

- white native English speakers
- white non-native English speakers / Non-white native English speakers (i.e. VEM-NESTs)
- Non-white, non-native English speakers

While acknowledging that this is a generalised way of categorising individuals, I argue that these labels are in line with the way individuals are currently grouped using the NS/NNS binary distinction. What is noticeable is that white NES category remains at the top, and non-white NNES are at the bottom. These top and bottom levels reflect the way individuals are categorised in the NS/NNS binary distinction, but with added aspect of race being foregrounded.

In-between could be considered a grey area in which white NNES, and non-white NES are found. They are placed on the same hierarchical level because there is potentially a greater amount of ambiguity with how these labels can be defined. As indicated by the findings, VEM-NESTs, who would be considered non-white NES, were valued because of their NES identity, yet some participants were not regarded as equals with white NESs. Although difficult to ascertain in the findings, there is the potential for VEM-NESTs would be regarded as exceptions to the white NES identity norm rather than being considered in their own right. While it has not been the focus of my thesis, there is also the opposite situation in which white NNESs can “pass” as NESTs (see Pillar 2002; Rampton 1995). With both groups the ambiguity lies with how race is associated with native/non-native speaker identities.

These historical associations of racial identities have become the assumed racial identities for “native-speakers” of English, particularly those that hail from Inner Circle countries (Kachru 1985). From this view, the NS/NNS is a simplistic description that bluntly divides individuals into one category or the other based on reductionist views of
NS, NNS, white, "non-white". Therefore VEM-NESTs do not easily fit into these neat categories because their identities are representative of the complexity of teacher identities that exist in TESOL which are not accounted for in the current way NS/NNS is defined.

When race is foregrounded in the NS/NNS binary distinction, the visibility of discriminatory hiring practices is made more apparent. In TESOL, valuing NES over NNES and hiring NESTs over NNEST is viewed as an acceptable form of discrimination. English language providers are very explicit in their preferences and make this widely known in their job advertisements and marketing materials. The reality is that there is already a racial hierarchy in place that is quietly enforced in TESOL. VEM-NESTs is a group that foregrounds race in the NS/NNS binary distinction therefore makes it increasingly difficult to ignore the way individuals are judged based on race and ethnicity.

Exploring alternative approaches to defining teacher identity will be difficult unless a wider discussion of race occurs in TESOL. The inclusion of additional levels within the NS/NNS binary distinction would be a step towards revealing the inequitable ways racial and ethnic identities are regarded. Within this hierarchy, the counter-stories of marginalised groups, such as VEM-NESTs, could open up opportunities for further research into perceptions of race from different stakeholders.

8.2.2 Establishing new norms through performativity

As previously discussed in Chapter Three, I presented Butler’s notion of performativity as a kind of speech act (1990; 1999) in which language is simultaneously representative and causative of reality. My study has applied Butler’s notion of performativity in order to examine the relationship between language and the NS/NNS binary distinction. I argued that the binary distinction is a kind of speech act because NS/NNS are labels used to give TESOL professionals meaning. NS/NNS are blunt ways of categorising individuals, yet demonstrate how labels become representations of a certain kind of reality because norms have developed in order to regulate how the NS/NNS binary distinction is used.

According to Butler (1993) the collective repetition of individual performances
throughout history has developed the norms that regulate membership into these categories. In this view, although NS/NNS norms precede the speaker (Yuval-Davis 2010), the norms themselves are not fixed but have the capacity to change through the repetition of different kinds of performed identities so that, over time, they may develop new ways of “being”. In light of how performative repetition can subvert identity norms (Butler 1999: 37) the collection of VEM-NEST counter-stories present alternative ways of defining NEST identities. The collective repetition of VEM-NEST performances challenge the racial limits of white NEST identity norms by presenting themselves as additional NEST identities and, in doing so, begin the process of changing the NS/NNS binary distinction from within. Through defining their identities within the NS/NNS binary VEM-NESTs can become part of the system, and thereby increasing the likelihood that eventually they may be regarded as a viable category within the binary distinction. Over time, it may be possible through the collective performances of VEM-NESTs, alongside the presentation of their counter narratives, to do away with the NS/NNS binary distinction by developing different, more equitable ways of defining teacher identity.

8.3 Racism is normal in TESOL

The experiences of VEM-NESTs challenge the way racism is currently understood in TESOL to some extent. The restoried narratives of VEM-NESTs are what Delgado and Stefancic (2001) regard as counter-narratives that question the inclusive veneer (Holliday 2005) of TESOL through problematising the assumptions made of NS/NNS identities. There is a tendency for Inner Circle stories to be heard because they conform to the widely used definitions of NS/NNS identities. The generally negative ways the participants’ racial and ethnic identities were perceived reflect the normality of racism embedded within the NS/NNS binary distinction used to place value on individuals, teachers and by extension, English language learners.

Critical Race Theory argues against the irregularity of racism and considers it as a normal aspect of life because racism exists in subtle forms that are not recognised as racist because it has become so engrained in our everyday existence (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). It can then be argued that racism is a normal aspect of the TESOL profession because racism exists in subtle forms that are not recognised as racist. Indeed, the
discriminatory practices (e.g. school hiring policies for “native-speakers” only) are tolerated in TESOL, yet would be considered unacceptable in other professions.

8.3.1 Racial discrimination rationalised as business-based decisions

The practice of rationalising discrimination against VEM-NESTs as business/school-based decisions are examples of how racism can be considered normal in TESOL. While there are a growing number of English language providers that hire VEM-NESTs, there remains the view that it is normal for English language schools to discriminate against job applicants to favour white “native-speakers” from Inner Circle countries. Sometimes this preference is explicit in job advertisements, as seen in following, more recent advertisements:

Requirements: 25-45 years old, Female Native white English speakers from USA and UK preferred, bachelor degree of arts or higher (majored in literature, education or other), at least 2 years university teaching experience, teachers who now hold a valid working visa in China is much preferred (ESL Job China, 2013)

Elementary School in________ Location: 1 hour away from Seoul by bus Starting date: March 1st City info: http://www.yj21.net/eng/index.asp Others: 100,000 won more for rural allowance fee + 5days more vacation Standard benefits: Reimbursed airfare, free housing, bonus, 20 days paid vacation, 1/2 medical Preference: Caucasian male teacher form USA, Canada and in mid 20’s to 35 (Korean ESL, 2013)

Advertisements that specify the preferred race of the job applicant are rare. However, advertisements that list preferred nationalities, age range and gender remain common practice in TESOL. Generally, racial preferences remain hidden from job advertisements, and instead applicants are weeded out through photos and/or videos sent as part of the application process. There are laws, such as the Data Protection Act in the UK, that make it illegal for companies to request photos from job applicants on the basis that it may be used to discriminate against the candidate. Indeed it may be difficult to prove that preference for white NES applicants are evident during the screening process in different contexts, but it does call into question why TESOL regards the continued use of photographs and videos as an acceptable method for assessing the suitability of an applicant.

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4 Data Protection Act 1998 for UK based regulations
The preference for hiring white NESTs from Inner Circle countries capitalises on a simplistic and narrow view of NS/NNS binary distinction. This view gives rise to the way racism continues to be normalised in TESOL through the quiet acceptance of white racial identity as having more valued than "non-white" identities by different stakeholders (e.g. students; English language providers; curriculum designers). The notion of "whiteness", proposed by Critical Race Theory (Delgado and Stefancic 2001), is the view that white individuals are more easily assumed to be more competent, educated, and sophisticated than “non-white” individuals. Thus, “non-white” individuals begin from a disadvantaged position and need to make more of an effort in order to be seen in equal terms as their “white” counterparts.

Various English language providers use this view to justify the practice of hiring white NESTs because it is assumed this group of teachers meet the assumed expectations of the students. From the examples discussed in Chapter Seven, various English language providers used this view to prevent VEM-NESTs from taking up teaching positions. For some participants, the decisions to reject VEM-NEST applications were defended by the educational institutions as business-based decisions. Peter’s manager positioned himself as someone who had to make a decision for the business rather than on a personal level. Similarly, the rejection of Suri’s application was presented as a necessary action due to perceived student preferences. The use of white NESTs as marketing tools was cited as the main reason Li was not employed, whereas Darcia’s school manager reasoned it was the preference of the parents. In each instance the organisation or the individual employer attempted to distance themselves from the uncomfortable fact that the decisions they took were based on the racial and ethnic identity of the VEM-NEST in question. Drawing attention to the business aspect of English language teaching was a means of justifying their discriminatory practices, regardless of whether the decision makers personally agreed with the decision. The attribution of value based on perceptions of racial and ethnic identities is still racist, regardless of the intention, yet remains an acceptable business based practice in TESOL.
8.3.2 The normality of questioning “non-white” NESTs

The act of asking direct and indirect questions about an individual’s NES identity was a common event experienced by each of the participants and indicates how normal it is to question the NESTs if they are not white. This shows, to an extent, the nationalities of Inner Circle countries remains associated with the providers of English “native-speakers” whose racial identity continues to be assumed as white. In TESOL, the combination of whiteness, native-speakerism, and the colonial history of ELT form a well established frame that views this line of questioning as normal.

The need to question an individual’s NES identity is rooted in the way value is placed on teachers based on the NS/NNS binary distinction. As discussed in Chapter Two, these categories are based on a dominant native-speaker model which considers “non-native speakers” as "linguistically handicapped" (Nemtchinova 2005) and this perceived deficiency is extended to their professionalism in which competency in a language, with its associations to teaching ability, remains a key feature in defining the NS/NNS labels. In this view, white NESTs are not subject to “Where are you from?” identity probing questions because they are already assumed to be competent, professional English language teachers.

The continuation of questions regarding NES identity were attempts made by other people to understand where VEM-NESTs could fit in their view of NS/NNS binary distinction. The context of these questions usually occurred during an initial meeting with a VEM-NEST, indicating that it may have been the first time students/parents would have encountered someone who did not fit their NEST expectations. During these initial encounters the potential for change occurred in the form of accepting the VEM-NEST as a different type of NEST. Acceptance was a way of broadening the NS/NNS boundaries through presenting alternative definitions that re-defined what constituted as a “real” native English speaker. Acceptance did not always occur, but the possibility of it happening is a step towards a more inclusive view of teacher identity in TESOL.

Part of the act of asking direct and indirect questions about one’s NES identities is the
way in which VEM-NESTs were prepared to answer these queries. VEM-NESTs learned to expect this line of questioning through experience, and while the intention behind the questions was interpreted differently, the participants were nonetheless prepared to answer inquiries to their NES identity. The answers required the participants to have a certain amount of awareness of how value is placed in the NS/NNS binary distinction, which they used to their advantage. The majority of the participants emphasised their nationalities because in their contexts they were aware that this aspect of their identity had the highest value. Emphasising their American / Canadian / British identities allowed the participants to meet the role identity norms that regulated who could be considered a NEST.

8.4 Thesis contributions

My thesis makes professional, conceptual and methodological contributions which are presented in the following sections.

8.4.1 Professional contributions

First, my thesis is a professional contribution towards raising awareness that racial and ethnic identities embedded in NS/NNS binary distinction. The view that white NESTs are from Inner Circle countries remains a powerful norm that maintains the two-tiered NS/NNS binary distinction that values individuals in inequitable ways. The participants of this study are but a small sample of individuals who have experienced the effects of inequality on their professional and emotional well-being. These findings of my study could be of interest to professionals who feel they could relate to some of the experiences of the participants on some level. This includes TESOL professionals from all backgrounds who may be struggling to make sense of their own professional identities.

Second, my thesis makes a professional contribution to the small, yet growing number of studies that discuss race and racism in TESOL. In Chapter Two I argued that the racial aspects of NS/NNS binary distinction needed to be foregrounded in discussions regarding teacher identities of professionals in TESOL. Discussing racism typically arouses discomfort, and a sense of threat in both everyday and academic discourses because it is an emotive and potentially divisive area of research. My study engages with topics that
are viewed as uncomfortable in TESOL scholarship and is a contribution to this small, yet necessary area of research.

8.4.2 Conceptual contribution

The first conceptual contribution is the exploration of the professional identities of VEM-NESTs who remain an invisible and underrepresented group in academic scholarship. Their experiences revealed the complex relationships between perceptions of race, nationalities and the English language. This aspect of my work contributes to the literature on teacher identity in TESOL, more specifically, work related to NS/NNS binary distinction.

Second, my thesis introduces the concept of performed role identities as a way of understanding how English language teacher identity operates in TESOL. My conceptual lens uses aspects of Butler’s (1990) notion of performativity and Stryker’s (1980) view of role identities in order to understand how language brings about meaning through the way individuals are labelled in TESOL. These labels, such as NEST, are indicative of role identities evident within an organised society and my conceptual framework sought to understand how language is used by individuals to negotiate meanings of the role identities they occupied.

Lastly, my thesis makes a conceptual contribution towards discussions that propose the notion that racism is normal in the way professionals in TESOL are given value (see Kubota and Lin 2009). Racism continues to be regarded as isolated incidents, put down to irrationality by an individual perpetrator towards the victim. In this view, social and political institutions, such as TESOL, are unaffected by racism and are assumed to view every member of society with equal measure. In order to understand how racism as a system of exclusion it is important to move beyond its manifestation in individual experiences and examine how it is evident further afield. This study discussed how racism is evident in the structural and epistemological aspects related to the NS/NNS binary distinction that frames how teacher identities are valued.
8.4.3 **Methodological contribution**

In the detailed description of the process I undertook to develop the restoried narratives used in this study, I have made a methodological contribution to the way narrative data is processed into a form used for research purposes. My study used a narrative-based approach to generate data, and focused on developing a more structured approach to the restorying process that accounted for the micro-decisions that occurred during the development of the restoried narratives. My approach would be considered more rigid than other restorying processes, but it was my intent to contribute a highly structured, step-by-step account. Whilst there remains substantial literature on the generation and analysis of narrative data, my approach adds to the growing exploration of the preparation, processing and presentation of narrative data.

8.5 **Limitations of my study**

The following are the limitations of this study which could offer opportunities for further research:

- As a result of my study, further research might well be conducted on exploring the possibilities of defining English language user identities outside the NS/NNS binary distinction.

- The scope of this study was limited to nine participants to allow for an in-depth examination into their experiences as VEM-NESTs. Further research using a larger number of participants may yield a wider range of experiences and perspectives.

- This study was limited to examining the experiences of English language teachers. Further research could examine the perspectives from different stakeholders (e.g. students, English language centre manager, recruitment agents) and would enable researchers to examine how different groups perceive the racial identities of TESOL professionals. Moreover, perspectives of white NESTs and white NNNESTs would be a welcomed addition to understanding how race is perceived in the NS/NNS binary distinction.

- This study indicated that different contextual factors affected the way particular races were perceived in specific situations. Further research might well be
conducted in a way that focuses on the influence of contextual factors, such as limiting the geographical location of the participants to one country.

8.6 Implications of my study

There are several implications that my study could be applied to policy and practice in TESOL. I have chosen to discuss several areas that I feel are the most applicable at this point of my research:

Second language teacher education: Classroom teachers have the potential to influence the way they are valued in terms of what they believe about themselves as professionals. Both inexperienced and experienced teachers should be made aware of why the NS/NNS binary distinction is inequitable so that they may begin to critically analyse their beliefs about who they think they are. A suggested approach would be for teacher education programmes (e.g. CELTA, DELTA, Trinity TESOL, MA TESOL etc.) to include modules on this topic area. This would involve a concentrated effort from teacher education providers to recognise the necessity of including this topic alongside more “practice” orientated modules (e.g. curriculum design, computer assisted language learning). This would allow teachers to explore how NS/NNS categories are defined along perceived linguistic and racial criteria and this exploration could enable teachers to critically reflect on the wider implications this view would have on the way value is placed on themselves, and on others.

This exploration could lead to a critical examination of the roles individuals could play in complying and/or addressing the inequality in TESOL. In particular, TESOL professionals who consider themselves white “native-speakers” of English should be made aware, and ultimately acknowledge that within the NS/NNS binary distinction, they occupy the positions of privilege. This particular group have a special responsibility to deal with the professional culture that sets up native-speakerism (Holliday 2005: 16) because currently their privileged position allows their voices to be listened to more than others. Moreover, acknowledging their privilege would demonstrate that they are part of the problem, and that these issues are not the sole responsibility of “non-native speakers / people of colour” because these issues are not confined to “non-native speakers / people of
colour”. Publically speaking out against inequality would demonstrate that NS/NNS binary distinction is problematic for all TESOL professionals, and that everyone is responsible for working towards a solution.

Classroom practice: Classroom teachers are in a position to potentially influence the way their students view NS/NNS identities. Raising awareness of the inequality embedded in the NS/NNS binary distinction could potentially have an effect on classroom practice. The taken for granted views of NS as ideal English language teachers could be challenged if teachers would be willing to critically explore with their students how NS/NNS categories are defined along linguistic and racial criteria, and the wider implications of these categories. Students could then extend this exploration to themselves, and critically reflect on how the binary distinction affects them as an English language learner.

On a practical level, I would encourage classroom teachers not to base their teaching practice on a “native-speaker” model but rather explore ways for their students to take ownership of the English they use. This would include resisting attempts to teach and correct students’ pronunciation in order to “sound like a native-speaker” and to resist only using classroom materials that feature American or British accents as models.

School hiring policies: My study has implications on the inequitable criteria English language providers use to recruit TESOL professionals and one of the main applications of my study would be to encourage English language providers to stop actively recruiting only “native-speakers” but instead focus on recruiting teachers on the basis of their professional qualifications (e.g. education, teaching certification, experience). This is already happening on a smaller scale, as described by some of the participants (see Jay and Andrés for examples), which indicates that there are some English language providers who are willing to hire “non-native speakers” in addition to “native-speakers”, even if the school has a preference for “native-speakers”. This is a small but significant step towards schools willing to employ both “native-speakers” and “non-native speakers” rather than only “native-speakers”.
It is worth noting that it is possible to invoke anti-discrimination laws during instances when discrimination has occurred, but it is highly dependent on a variety of factors. For example, the VEM-NESTs who experienced discrimination in this study could have sought legal representation. However, given their status as a foreign worker and the potentially high legal costs, taking their cases to court was not a viable option. Moreover some countries, such as Hong Kong, have created laws that encourage discrimination against “non-native speakers” because of the legal requirement for employing only “native-speaker” is part of Hong Kong’s Native English Teacher scheme (see Eoyang et al 2012). Individuals or even class action lawsuits would find it difficult to win an antidiscrimination case in the Hong Kong context. This is not to say that individuals who experience discrimination should avoid taking legal action if they feel it is necessary. However, given the difficulty of invoking antidiscrimination laws I feel that the struggle for equality in the TESOL profession could be fought more effectively on different fronts.

Professional accreditation of schools and employment agencies: Major professional bodies (such as TESOL, BAAL, IATEFL, AAAL) should take the lead in fostering equality by adopting antidiscrimination principles that they expect their members and associates to follow. Some of these principles should include taking a stand against advertising, promoting and disseminating “native-speaker” job adverts. This was a stance that the British Association of Applied Linguistics (BAAL) took, which was the outcome of a long and detailed email discussion among members that were concerned with promoting discrimination⁵. However there is very little on the current website (see http://www.baal.org.uk/index.html) that clearly states BAAL’s antidiscrimination stance. For professional associations to have a greater impact, antidiscrimination statements and policies need to be publically known and disseminated through their respective media outlets (e.g. email, official websites, Twitter) so that it is clear to the wider TESOL profession where they stand.

Moreover professional associations should take a more active role in addressing issues of inequality by creating opportunities for their members to engage with relevant topic

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⁵ The email discussion took place over a listserv in 2014. I did not participate in the email discussion but was included in email exchanges. A copy of this email exchange can be made available upon request.
areas and with each other. Enabling research to be more readily accessible would help inform their members of the studies being undertaken as well as introducing the more theoretical considerations of how inequality is embedded in the NS/NNS binary distinction. It is also important for members to be able to come together to explore these areas so that these discussions do not remain in the academic realm. I would suggest that all special interest groups, not just those that focus on “research” or “teacher education”, should bring together members (e.g. online, during their annual meetings, symposiums etc.) and allocate time to discuss how inequality is embedded within their areas of interest and what can be done to address it.

Overall these are some of the main implications my study has had on the policy and practice of TESOL. I now turn to concluding my thesis with some personal reflections.

8.7 Final personal reflections

This study has helped put to rest some of the negative emotions attached to my experiences with racism as a VEM-NEST because I now have a better understanding of the phenomena. In many ways I feel I have just touched the surface of what would be a long road towards challenging inequality in TESOL, beginning with my own identity contradictions. Despite what I have learned in this study I sometimes still use my Canadian identity to explain who I am because it is the most easily acceptable answer. I also still find myself becoming defensive when asked indirect questions regarding my level of English (e.g. How do you speak English so well?) and/or my Canadian identity (e.g. Where are you really from?). There is a contradiction between the goals and the identity performances that I have yet to consistently apply. Conducting this study has been a valuable learning experience which has gradually expanded my awareness of the position of privilege that I occupy. I had taken for granted the significance of calling myself a native speaker without realising my status was gained at the expense of another. With the knowledge that I have gained I can no longer feel comfortable nor confident using this label and, as such, am seeking new alternatives to understanding identity in TESOL.

More importantly, I have been able to connect with others like me whose perspectives have tempered my own views, and challenged me to consider different perspectives. The
way I understand VEM-NEST as a role identity is one that is intrinsically tied with who I am as a human being. Perceptions of my racial and linguistic identities, be it positive or negative, are taken personally regardless of the roles I perform. Meeting the participants and developing their restored narratives has been encouraging and has helped me realise studies like mine have the potential, however small, to make a difference.
REFERENCES


Appendices

APPENDIX A: My story

(The following is an excerpt of a chapter I wrote which is found in Language and Culture (2010) by David Nunan and Julie Choi (eds.). I’ll start with this excerpt as a way of presenting the context and will add my own reflections at the end of it.)

Narrative

I’m a Canadian-Filipino. By this description I am both Canadian and Filipino. But how is this combination really defined? I’ve been asking myself that question for the past 30 years and still haven’t arrived at a satisfactory answer. My parents emigrated from the Philippines in 1976 and three years later I became the first child from both sides of the family to have been born abroad. This was important, as I would be the first of the family to have grown up being influenced by two different cultures.

My parents had a strong influence in my cultural upbringing. From an early age I was taught the ‘rules’ of how to conduct myself in Filipino society. However, my parents also wanted their daughter to be a “full” Canadian and insisted that I grew up speaking only English as a way to integrate into Canadian society with more ease. I wasn’t encouraged to learn Tagalog (Philippine national dialect) or Ilocano (my mother’s dialect) for fear that it would be a hindrance to my development as a Canadian. As such, I was expected to participate in learning Canada’s second official language: French. From the age of 5 to 14 I learnt French formally at school. I eventually stopped learning French not only because it was compulsory (up to that age) but also because I didn’t see any use for it in my future. Parallel to this decision was my own choice to forgo attempts at learning my parent’s dialects due to the fact that in many ways I didn’t feel Filipino enough to do so.

Ironically at university some of my courses involved studying various dead languages, such as Latin, Ancient Greek and Aramaic. These I relished, as they didn’t have a stake in my own identity. I could study these languages free of any further implication they would have had on me.

Upon finishing university I travelled to China to teach English. During my time in China I was often mistaken for a local teacher because of my Filipino background. In this context I discovered that my students had certain pre-conceptions of what an English language teacher embodies. Whenever I walked into a classroom to start a brand new course, my initial appearance would often be met with a mixture of surprise and disappointment, and sometimes with anger. At the time I couldn’t understand what my students were saying to each other but it was clear from their facial expressions that they didn’t feel comfortable with me as their teacher. From the outset it became apparent that the majority of students assumed that a native speaker would not only be from Canada (or the UK, USA or Australia), but that they would also be White. This was a huge eye-opener for me because I hadn’t thought that my ethnicity would be an issue, much less a liability. For a while I felt extremely frustrated at my situation because I couldn’t find an easy way to cope or find a solution. In many ways I also felt isolated. My colleagues were very supportive and encouraged me along the way, yet, they didn’t share the same anxieties as I did simply because they didn’t look like a local.

One of the ways I used to address the issue was first to expect the mixed reactions of my students whenever I started a new class. In doing so I was better able to prepare myself both emotionally
and practically for the challenge of, essentially, proving my credentials as their English language teacher. Therefore, part of my routine, when starting a brand new class, was to launch into a mini-monologue about myself. I would usually share some anecdote about my life in Canada and present it at a normal speaking rate in order to demonstrate that I was a native speaker of English. As soon as I finished my students immediately became more willing and open to the idea of accepting me as their English teacher. In a way, it was my attempt to “attack first” by establishing who I am before any questions were raised.

Ironically, I took to studying Chinese as a way to “blend in” to the world outside the classroom. In many ways I was granted an insiders’ view because people would carry on with whatever they were doing when I entered the scene. However, as soon as I spoke Chinese my charade was up and their behaviour changed. This was frustrating for me as I wasn’t quite sure what was expected of me. I look like I should speak Chinese, but I don’t. They were often confused since my outside appearance didn’t fit into their idea of a “foreigner”.

The following section is a description of a singular event from my own experiences that serves to highlight the issues surrounding native speakers of color.

Event

It was toward the end of the 15-minute break and I was back inside the classroom erasing the whiteboard in preparation for the next session. I had been in the country for nearly nine months and at the time, considered myself rather conversant in Chinese. I was able to travel independently around the city, go shopping and read basic Chinese characters. However, I made it a point not to let my students know that I understood the language as I found that their assumptions about my lack of Chinese language ability helped to distance myself from my students.

This was only the third lesson that I’d had with this group of students, during which I would often have a few latecomers joining the class for the first time. Consequently they would miss the pre-prepared speech I so often gave at the beginning of each course and, upon arrival, were confused with my appearance. Usually, during these instances I would let the other students inform their classmates about me. It took the pressure off me to try to validate my position as their teacher, which was relief in many ways. I eavesdropped on their conversation, which took place in Chinese, and usually went along the lines of:

New Student: “I thought our teacher was a native speaker!”
Current Student: “She is a native speaker.”
New Student: (pause) “But she looks Chinese!”
Current Student: “She’s not! She’s Canadian.”

At the time I wasn’t really aware of the implications that this conversation had, other than feeling that I’d rather let my students defend my right to be there at the front of the classroom than repeating my speech over again. On this particular day, though, I remember one of the new students approached me with the following question (in English):

New Student: “So, you’re not Chinese?”
Me: “No, not at all!”
New Student: “You’re family is Chinese?”
Me: “No, none of them are Chinese. Both my parents are from the Philippines.”
New Student: “But your English is so good!”
Me: “Well, I'm a native speaker.”
New Student: “Of course.”

At this point I could tell she wasn’t convinced of my English credentials. I felt myself grow increasingly frustrated and I found myself defensively saying the following:

“I’m from Canada.”

Suddenly the light seemed to go on. Her face lit up in a smile and she thanked me for my time before sitting down, obviously pleased with the news. I had told previous classes that I was from Canada but this was the first time that I had used that fact as a deliberate way of validating myself as a native speaker.

(End of excerpt)

Personal Reflection

I wrote this account a while ago and even as I read it now, it still stirs emotions within. I’d like to think that I’ve moved on beyond this but the sad fact is that to this day I still use my “Canadianness” as a way to prove to others that I’m a native speaker of English.

Doing this doesn’t frustrate me as much as it used to because I think I’ve learned to expect it from people. I think back then, when students used to regularly question my English credentials I was still trying to understand why my race was such an issue as well as deal with all the growing pains of being a newly qualified teacher. I remember it being incredibly frustrating time of my life professionally because I had to come face to face with the expectations students had about what an English language teacher “should” be. I remember being really angry and feeling very powerless over the whole situation and thinking that it wasn’t my fault that I looked like a local, I just did, so why should anyone expect me to act like one? These were really difficult issues and there came a point where I had to decide whether to pack it all in and do something else – which meant giving up a profession I love, or find a way to deal with the challenges to my identity. I chose the latter, thinking that I should at least try to figure out the reason behind all of this.

And so, as a result, I’ve been using my Canadianness as a way of dealing with questions posed about my native speaker credentials. But I’m not happy using this reason because it doesn’t really challenge the assumptions that people have about what it means to be a native speaking English language teacher. I use Canadian identity to justify to others that I’m a native speaker of English and therefore uphold the very stereotype that causes me grief in the first place. By doing this I benefit professionally at the expense of others by distancing myself from being associated with being “just” a local teacher.

On a more personal level, I wonder what it means what being all this means to me. As a Filipino – Canadian I am both and neither identity. As a visible ethnic minority who is a native English speaker I am both simultaneously and not “just” one or the other. I’m both. And it’s the possibility of being both identities that I sometimes find difficult to be recognised by others.
APPENDIX B: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study that explores the status and identity of being a visible ethnic minority native English speaking teacher in an EFL/ESL teaching context. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish.

Before you decide I would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve for you. There will be an opportunity for me to go through the information sheet with you and answer any questions you have. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this!

Who will conduct the research?

Miss Eljee Anne Javier
School of Education, Ellen Wilkinson Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, United Kingdom (M13 9PL)

Title of research

An Honorary Native Speaker: Examining the factors that contribute to the identity and status of visible ethnic minority native speaking English language teachers.

Why have I been chosen?

This study looks at the experiences of native speakers of English who are visible ethnic minorities that work in an EFL or ESL context. You have been chosen because your background fits this description.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

Stage One – First I will present to you a personal account of my experiences as a VEM-NEST and I ask that you read it through. Then, I would like to invite you to respond by writing about your own experiences. There are no right or wrong responses. Please feel free to give as much or as little detail as you wish.

Stage Two – This stage involves a one-to-one interview that will last no more than an hour. You will be asked to elaborate on points or ideas raised in your written account. Also you are invited to ask me about any particular points raised in my written account. A possible second, one-to-one interview that will last no more than an hour may be requested which you will be free to choose to decline or to take part in.

Stage Three: Finally you’ll be presented with your own story as re-told by me using the responses during the interview and will be invited to comment on your own story if you so wish.

What happens to the data collected?

The data will be stored in an encrypted file on my personal laptop that is password protected. Should I need to make a print out of the data your name will be changed and the hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at my home. Moreover you are free to ask for a copy of any documents that relate to your data at any time during the study.
How is confidentiality maintained?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be shared with your permission. Your identity will be kept confidential by using pseudonyms.

In order to ensure that your views are represented as accurately as possible, it will be necessary to make an audio recording of the interview. However should you feel uncomfortable during any stage you are free to withdraw your consent to be recorded. Moreover, you have the option to speak “off the record” should you prefer. I will keep the audio recordings in an encrypted file on a password protected laptop and will destroy them when this study has ended (by 2014).

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. It is entirely voluntary. If you do decide to take part I will describe the study and go through the information sheet. You will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time or choose not to answer certain questions without giving reason and without detriment to yourself.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

No.

What is the duration of the research?

Stage one may take up to 45 minutes, depending on how quickly your write. Stage two will last up to an hour for the first interview. If a second interview is needed it will also last up to an hour.

Where will the research be conducted?

I will be based in Manchester, England for the duration of the study. Both stages will be conducted through the Internet (where applicable), the first stage will be done via email where the second stage will be through an internet telephone connection (i.e. Skype).

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

No, the outcomes of the research will not be published but will be made available through the University of Manchester library.

Contact for further details

If you would like to discuss the study in greater depth or would like to ask for further details please email me: eljee.javier@manchester.ac.uk

What if something goes wrong?

Please contact me on eljee.javier@manchester.ac.uk or write to the following address:

The Manchester Institute of Education (The School of Environment, Education and Development)
The University of Manchester
Ellen Wilkinson Building Oxford Road,
Manchester, United Kingdom (M13 9PL)

If you want to make a formal complaint about the conduct of the study please contact:

The Research Office
Graduate Education
2nd Floor, The Christie Building
University of Manchester, Oxford Road
Manchester, United Kingdom (M13 9PL)
CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below.

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded.

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes.

I agree to take part in the above project.

Name of participant ___________________________ Date ___________ Signature ___________

Eljee Javier

Name of person taking consent ___________________________ Date ___________ Signature ___________
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<th>Reply from Participant</th>
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APPENDIX D: The annotated version of Suri’s Written Narrative

WRITTEN NARRATIVE (P1)
I am a citizen of the world!

Well, seriously, both my parents were born and raised in India (Kerala). They were both school teachers and got jobs teaching at high schools in newly independent countries in Africa. So I was born in Zambia. I spent my childhood moving around a lot – Zambia, India and Zimbabwe. Came to the UK at the age of 18 to go to Uni. Until the age of 24 I lived/studied here in the UK, then because of a career in EFL lived in various countries (mostly Africa, but also S. America and Asia) until my marriage in 2001. After a year in Spain, I moved back to the UK and have lived here ever since. (I’m 41 years old).

I suppose a particular event, because it was so painful, occurred quite late in my career, in 2001, in Spain. Before that I had always got interest from my students (Oh, you’re Indian and an English teacher), but I taught in countries that were used to polylingualism. (Most Africans speak three languages)...but in southern Spain, people are more insular. I often got a completely amazed reaction when students first saw me, but I always told them I was Indian quite soon (even though most Indians wouldn’t think of me as Indian anymore!). I guess I wanted to over-turn stereotypes, to show then that an Indian person could have a good education, become a native speaker, become a good teacher etc.

But arriving for my class (teaching catering staff at a posh hotel in Seville) a manager accosted me:
M: De donde eres? (Where are you from?)
S: Soy de la India. (I’m from India.)
M: Hablas ingles? (You speak English?)
Sheena: Si...hablo ingles. (Yeah, I speak English.)
M: Pero hablas bien? Hablas como un nativo? (But you speak it? You speak like a native?)
S: Si, si, claro que si. (Yes, yes, of course.)

It was humiliating on many accounts...to be confronted like that in the hotel vestibule, to be accosted in Spanish (which I’m not confident in), and to have my professional credentials queried (I had been sent to teach on-site by the most respected language school in Seville – IH). And the real injury was that the students loved me! So I think there was some sort of power struggle, and I was tangled up in that. But it was clear that I needed to be white in order to speak English in their eyes.

Hope this helps, sorry, mad busy.

Best,
APPENDIX E: Final interview schedule for Suri

Interview Schedule: P1
- Press “Hijack” and “Record” (Audio hijack app) and check record button (Call recorder)
- Double check consent and reminder this will be recorded.
- Last no more than an hour. You’re free to stop at any time and you can also ask me any questions you may have. All info will be anonymised and pseudonyms will be used.
- Interview questions will be, for the most part, on your story. Throughout the discussion if you’d like to ask me any questions please feel free.

I’d like to start with asking you a few questions about your background.
Do you see yourself as a native speaker of English?
How do you define this aspect of your identity?
Before the incident your described in Spain, you mentioned that you had “always got interest from my students” with regards to being Indian and an English teacher. Could you clarify how they were interested?

- Can you give an example of the types of questions or comments you received?
- How did this affect how you perceived your identity (NS)?

In contrast, Spanish students reacted to you differently. Can you give any examples of the types of question or comments your received?

- How did this affect how your perceived your identity (NS)?

Why did you tell your Spanish students you were Indian “quite soon”?

- Do you still do this nowadays?
- If not, why not?

Can you explain your comment “how most Indians wouldn’t think of me as Indian anymore”?

The exchange between the manager and yourself.

- When did this event take place?
- Were you by yourself or did this take place in front of others?
- Was this a one-off event or did this continue throughout?
- How has this affected how you present yourself as a teacher?

You mentioned that “it was clear that you (I) needed to be white in order to speak English in their eyes”. What do you think about this?
APPENDIX F: Sample of raw transcription of Suri’s interview

Participant 1: Transcript (Version 1)
I - (2:45) First question I have is with regards to your background, which is fascinating, and it’s quite varied. You mention yourself that you see yourself as a native speaker and could you elaborate on that, what do you mean and what’s your understanding of it?
P1- (3:01) Well, being Indian and in India – especially in the south where I’m from English has a very strong presence and if you’re a middle class sort of Indian which I think my family would be you tend to learn English and go to English medium schools so there’s always a parallel with your mother tongue and English. I’ve been speaking English since I was a kid so I can’t remember not speaking it. So in that sense I regard myself as a native speaker. So when I first came to the UK it wasn’t directly from India it was via y’know Africa and so again a lot of my childhood my schooling was in English medium sorts of schools in Africa. So it was a very British sort of education so when I arrived in the UK I suppose I had an accent but I was, it was my first language really so I never have any issues being a non-native speaker of English and international students had other issues, y’know the language wasn’t a problem.
I - (4:09) Was there any sort of doubt growing up that “my English is English” or...?
P1 - (4:13) No when I came to the UK I was, I realised that there was more to speaking English than just grammatically correctly or the vocabulary – it had to be plugged into the culture y’know so as an international student y’know if I went out with people I had no clue of television programmes they talked about and things like that or maybe some sort of pop references or, so. For example, Withnail and I was really popular when I was at uni. Do you know this programme?
I - (4:44) Well...
P1 - (4:46) You escaped! (laughs) It was one of the tests I had to pass actually before I actually got married to my husband! But, ah - references, y’know, so they, students would quote to each other things from this film that I had no idea that that was a quotation or when it fell or came into speech so even being completely fluent in English and considering English my first language I had problems with communication but y’know not because of the language but because of the cultural references.
I - (5:23) Then when it comes to, um, when you start talking about, there was an incident that you described in Spain, you mentioned before that incident that you always had interests from your students – like say in Africa – with regards to being Indian and an English teacher. Could you clarify what they mean by interested?

P1 - (5:41) Yeah, well there is a strong sort of history and strong links between India and a lot of countries in Africa because when a lot of the countries became independent in Africa, for example, like Zambia. Because, they, they weren’t politically, aligned to the United States or Russia at the time it was very much a move to sort of political affiliations. They belonged to what was known as the ‘non-aligned’ movement, and that was started by India. We would just be strong countries that weren’t sort of gonna say “I’m a friend of the US” or “I’m a friend of Russia” or the Soviet Union rather but that they would be non-aligned so there’s a huge group of mostly ex-colonies of the UK that belonged to this “NAM”, non-aligned movement. The short story is that these newly independent countries in Africa called for teachers from India so my parents were both school teachers and they got jobs in schools in these newly independent countries to sort of build up the education system. And so people in Africa are very used to seeing Indian people and in like some countries, like South Africa and Kenya, there are really huge populations of Indians who came over before independence so in the 1900s y’know to work on the railways, to work, and so generations have grown up in these countries. So in South Africa if you met an Indian in South Africa then probably their great-great grandfathers were probably born in South Africa and the same in Kenya.
APPENDIX G: Example of a complete restored narrative (Suri)

Growing up in different countries
Well, seriously, both my parents were born and raised in India (Kerala). They were both school teachers and got jobs teaching at high schools in newly independent countries in Africa. So I was born in Zambia. I spent my childhood moving around a lot – Zambia, India and Zimbabwe. Well, being Indian and in India – especially in the south where I’m from, English has a very strong presence and if you’re a middle class sort of Indian, which I think my family would be, you tend to learn English and go to English medium schools so there’s always a parallel with your mother tongue and English. I’ve been speaking English since I was a kid so I can’t remember not speaking it. So, in that sense I regard myself as a native speaker.

So when I first came to the UK it wasn’t directly from India it was via Africa, and so again a lot of my childhood my schooling was in English medium sorts of schools in Africa. Well, there is a strong sort of history and strong links between India and a lot of countries in Africa because when a lot of the countries became independent in Africa - for example like Zambia - because they weren’t politically aligned to the United States or Russia. At the time it was very much a move to sort of political affiliations. They belonged to what was known as the ‘non-aligned’ movement, and that was started by India. We would just be strong countries that weren’t sort of gonna say “I’m a friend of the US” or “I’m a friend of Russia” or “the Soviet Union” but that they would be non-aligned so there’s a huge group of mostly ex-colonies of the UK that belonged to this “NAM, non-aligned movement.”

The short story is that these newly independent countries in Africa called for teachers from India so my parents were both school teachers and they got jobs in schools in these newly independent countries to sort of build up the education system. And so people in Africa are very used to seeing Indian people and in some countries, like South Africa and Kenya, there are really huge populations of Indians who came over before independence so in the 1900s, y’know to work on the railways, and so generations have grown up in
these countries. So in South Africa if you met an Indian in South Africa then probably their great-great grandfathers were probably born in South Africa and the same in Kenya. Now my family don’t belong to that sector of the population but it just shows that in Africa students are used to seeing Indians and used to seeing Indians in teaching jobs and higher professional sort of jobs. So they were always interested in my story but they never questioned my validity of being a teacher or of being a native speaker of English.

So it was a very British sort of education. I came to the UK at the age of 18 to go to uni, so when I arrived in the UK I suppose I had an accent but I was - it was my first language really so I never have any issues being a non-native speaker of English and international students had other issues, y’know the language wasn’t a problem. I realised that there was more to speaking English than just grammatically correctly or the vocabulary – it had to be plugged into the culture. So as an international student if I went out with people I had no clue of television programmes they talked about and things like that or maybe some sort of pop references or, so. For example, Withnail and I was really popular when I was at uni. So they – students - would quote to each other things from this film that I had no idea that was a quotation or when it fell or came into speech so even being completely fluent in English and considering English my first language I had problems with communication but, y’know not because of the language but because of the cultural references. Until the age of 24 I lived and studied here in the UK, then because of a career in EFL lived in various countries (mostly Africa, but also S. America and Asia) until my marriage in 2001. After a year in Spain, I moved back to the UK and have lived here ever since. (I’m 41 years old).

The British Council and native speakers
I worked in Venezuela for a short time. When I was in Venezuela I worked for the British Council so you’re in this sort of very strong institution with all the branding and I think that probably - I never got any questions about - I always got questions about my background but like “Oh yeah y’know, where you from?” but they never questioned the validity of my qualifications. Maybe because I was working in the British Council and they sort of knew I belonged to that but I always got questioned - “Where are you from?” -
that sort of question. Well, I would normally say, well just recently I say I’m Indian origin, because now I’m British as well and have dual nationality but until about 4 years ago I didn’t have British nationality so I’d just say I’m Indian and I’d let them work for it a bit y’know to find out like “Oh you don’t speak English like an Indian!” “No, no I don’t, no.” “Hmmm?”

Actually that reminds me, when I was in the British Council you have an interview in London, you’re London recruited but then you don’t have to follow the interview process again, you can just apply for different councils all over the world and I remember I was moving on from I think it was Equatorial Guinea I did apply for the British Council in Korea and the director phoned me back and said, “This is just unofficial but we’d love to have you but I think you’d have big problems here not being white.” So that was, that would never happen in the UK today. And part of me was saying “Why don’t you employ me and then just try to overturn stereotypes” rather than - but then I wasn’t British at the time, I was still – I just had an Indian passport so that could have been some of the issues there. So yeah, it has made me remember things your questions. I remember things that have happened.

Critical incident description
I suppose a particular event, because it was so painful, occurred quite late in my career, in 2001, in Spain. It was over a 6-week period I was giving the intensive English classes and this was like 2 weeks in. But arriving for my class (teaching catering staff at a posh hotel in Seville) a manager accosted me:

Manager: De donde eres?
S: Soy de la India.
M: Hablas ingles?
S: Si...hablo ingles.
M: Pero hablas bien? Hablas como un nativo?
S: Si, si, claro que si.
So it was very hurtful, I suppose. It wasn’t in front of my class, which was strange! I don’t understand why it happened. It was humiliating on many accounts...to be confronted like that in the hotel vestibule, to be accosted in Spanish (which I’m not confident in), and to have my professional credentials queried (I had been sent to teach on-site by the most respected language school in Seville – IH).

Reflections on those involved (management and students)
So there was no good reason for me to be questioned like that other than hotel management seeing me come in and thinking “Who is IH sending us? We’re paying good money! We want a proper teacher!” And the real injury was that the students loved me! When they had started the course they had given good feedback, they were learning, they were coming to classes, which apparently was a big problem because they work long hours. So making them come to an extra class where previously the attendance had been really poor.

I was involved in a, in some sort of power struggle. I think the money they were spending on the courses was coming from management, obviously, and the students were in positions of low power. They weren’t questioned or even seemed asked “How do you find the classes?” because they would have given very good feedback. Well the first meeting (with the students), inevitably asked, “Where are you from?” and they were so jolly and welcoming and really could establish a good rapport with them. At the end of the course they organised a little party so they were really lovely and other than the inevitable first questions “Where are you from?” y’know there was no question. I think it was because, y’know, they were sort of - for want of a better word - working class Spanish people who have a strong respect for the teaching profession they had that sort of image of me. Whereas, maybe the higher level of management didn’t have that sort of perception of teachers.

What happened instead was it was just all on the top level, y’know, and they didn’t even...for some reason they didn’t even want to go to the school and ask the school, which was very strange but y’know it was a very odd incident. They never came to
observe. There was no involvement, it was simply - I think they were just questioning where the money was going. So I think there was some sort of power struggle, and I was tangled up in that. But it was clear that I needed to be white in order to speak English in their eyes.

And I did go back to the school later and I told the about this and they were just horrified and I wanted to tell them just in case there was another ethnic minority teacher coming to teach because I left soon after that I left Spain soon after that. And I said you’ve got to, y’know this is what happens so you know definitely in case it happens next time so that the teacher will have more support or in some way to pre-empt anything like that.

**Reflections on responses**

I suppose it’s made me a bit wary of Spanish students, maybe. Where I’ve had lots of Spanish students in my career and it was only when I was living in Spain that I had, sort of, a couple of other episodes as well with Spanish students. One class, they said, “You look like a gypsy in Spanish – gitana” which is not a compliment because Gypsy-Romanians are not considered well in Spain. So there were other incidents but it was only when I was actually living in Seville so I think I’ve managed to compartmentalize it and keep that within that situation when we were living there, when I was working there because since I’ve had very good, sort of, relationships with Spanish students so probably not, it’s probably not affected me.

But, in Spain it wasn’t the only sort of episode I had when I was made to be quite aware that they - I think it was the insularity. This was 10 years ago. Things might have changed in 10 years. It was being also confronted like that in a public place, and being confronted. I think it could have been done in a different way. They could have phoned up the school and asked, “This teacher, is she qualified?” And the school would have completely backed me up but it was done on a personal level in Spanish which I could speak but, obviously you’re taken aback when you’re suddenly spoken to like that. And also appalling because the students were really responding to my classes and they really loved me so I was wondering where it was coming from. There wasn’t any bad feedback from the students.
I had always got interest from my students (Oh, you’re Indian and an English teacher), but I taught in countries that were used to polylingualism. Most Africans speak three languages, but in southern Spain, people are more insular. I often got a completely amazed reaction when students first saw me, but I always told them I was Indian quite soon (even though most Indians wouldn’t think of me as Indian anymore!). I guess I wanted to over-turn stereotypes, to show them that an Indian person could have a good education, become a native speaker, become a good teacher etc.

Views on “proper” language and the native speaker

Well I think, it taught me that I expected Spain to be a sort of plural sort of society because of the y’know the Spanish colonies in Latin America and Spanish colony in Africa where I worked, in Guinea where Spanish is spoken and people speak it well. It was like I mentioned, they (*Africans*) are very good linguists themselves they speak the language of their mother tongue, they speak the language of the coloniser and other languages so polylingualism wasn’t new to a lot of Africans but they never felt the need to question me whereas in Spain, and funnily enough because Spanish also has a presence all over the world. In the south of Spain there was a certain insularity where good Spanish, Castillian Spanish, belonged to Spain and Latin Americans didn’t speak good Spanish so I think they transferred that to good English belongs to y’know what they’ve perceived as British people and didn’t belong to others outside that circle.

But what I hadn’t realized is that idea that they speak Spanish there but it’s not proper Spanish it’s not Castillian Spanish – it’s a different accent, they use different grammar in some sentences so it’s actually degrees of Spanish in these people’s eyes, of quality of Spanish spoken. And for them, the best quality Spanish came out of white people from Spain, not a mixed raced person from Columbia or even maybe a white person from Argentina, not even. But so in some ways they transferred that to English language sort of setting, ok, so like these people, these ethnic minorities in the UK, they might be speaking English but they’re not speaking it well, maybe they’ve got their own slang, maybe
they’ve got their own grammar, so I want to learn proper English from a white person. It’s possibly what they were thinking.

Reflections on race and NESTS
Something that I’ve done in the past, that I’ve sort of tackled it head on y’know like I’d introduce a module of multicultural Britain and things like that. So, even if it’s just a quiz, but we talked about British authors, British film makers who are ethnic minorities and I just think, I think the whole idea is because a lot of countries are not used to a cosmopolitan sort of society. Because, like Tiger Woods could be a sort of example of somebody who is a visible ethnic minority and very good at his profession but he’s lost a few brownie points in my book. I dunno, but it can be hurtful and you’ve got to have a thick skin in some respects.

If you’re an ethnic minority who’s a teacher of English it doesn’t mean, it doesn’t necessarily mean that you’re a native speaker. I don’t think the two can be spoken about in the same way. I am an example of maybe an overlap where we’re both native speakers but we’re both also ethnic minorities but I think there must be a very big percentage of English language teachers in the UK, in the world, who are not native speakers of English but they’re ethnic minorities so I suppose, on some level, I can sympathise. If a student studies in the UK they’re expecting to have an experience that they couldn’t get in their own countries and maybe in their own countries they were exposed to other ethnic minority English language teachers, maybe their own countrymen teaching them English but if they come to the UK and they spend all that money they want the real deal.

Now the question then in a way to educate them, it doesn’t mean that the real deal comes from white teachers or white people. In fact being more grammatically correct or better English depends on your education rather than the colour of your skin. So I can see their points of view, maybe because y’know coming from India you are exposed to different sort of grades of English fluency depending on your background, depending on your job, depending on your exposure that you have. So having said that, I think a lot of importance is based on being or having a teacher that is a native speaker whereas you’re
forgetting that they also have to be good teachers. There’s a pedagogical side, you can probably learn a lot from a very good teacher who is not a native speaker. If they can say, y’know, I’m gonna go out or I’m going to go out – what difference does it make, y’know, in the long run. You’re not going to end up being a native speaker by being taught by a native speaker so, there is that side to it as well. I suppose students pay a lot of money often so they can get to choose what they want in a sense, but because they all know that, y’know, teachers aren’t the same quality, that some teachers are better than others – is that because they’re native speakers or in terms of response to class, response to students, pedagogical awareness and things like that.

View of own VEM-NEST identity and others
I think I know why it doesn’t bother me so much to say to students “I’m Indian” and then let them find out. Actually they learn quite a lot in class. I’ve been very lucky to have sort of very positive responses from students and it sort of endless goodbyes and sort of ceremonies and photo calls – they’ve all sort of said or introduced me as “This is my teacher. She’s from India!” So they’ve not been cowed by that but they don’t go around saying, “This is my teacher and she’s a native speaker of English y’know but she was born in India.” They don’t go through all those different combinations y’know that we have to go through in the UK when you go through like what is the origin of your parents. I think I’ve sort of grated because I think like in The States people are much happier saying “I’m Italian-American” or “I’m Greek-American” but why can’t we say “I’m Indian-British” here because it’s become such a huge thing. I wasn’t born in this country. My parents are from India.

I’ve always been proud that students have not sort of changed their opinion of me because they still think of me as being Indian but they think of me as being a very good teacher and that, for me, is really the battle because I think alluded to it my email. I want people to know that you can be Indian and be very educated and be very good at what you do, and that you don’t have to come out of the UK education system to get somewhere like this. So this has been sort of a battle for me that I want to make people more aware that developing countries also have very good universities and good schools.
and I can be a product, and in a small way I am a product of the Indian education system and they accept me as a good English teacher so, I think that’s a positive thing.